

**An Exposition of
The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta**



by
Bhikkhu Pesala

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Association for Insight Meditation

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Foreword

The translation is based on that by T.W. Rhys Davids, published on the Internet Sacred Text Archive: [Buddhist Suttas](#). This translation dates from 1881, so the language is inevitably very dated. I have replaced archaic terms, and done my best to make it easy to read.

My own comments on the translation use a different font and indented paragraph settings to distinguish them from the translation of the actual text. I have also added footnote references and hyperlinks for further study. Footnote references to the Pāli texts refer to the Roman script edition of the Pali Text Society — in the translations these page numbers are given near the spine or in the body of the text like this: [72], which is where the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta begins (D.ii.72). The many footnotes made by Rhys Davids, which are of a scholarly nature, have been omitted.

A modern translation of the Dīghanikāya by Maurice Walsh is available from [Wisdom Books](#), which I have not used for reasons of copyright. Another translation by Sister Vajira and Francis Story, published by the Buddhist Publication Society, can be found on the [Access to Insight](#) web site.

I have adopted the paragraph numbering used by the Pāli text edition of the [CSCD Tipiṭaka](#) so that those who know some Pāli can easily find the relevant passage referred to in the translation or my comments. The headings are my translations of the section headings found in the CSCD edition, with the Pāli section headings below as subheadings in italics. To study the Pāli texts, I recommend downloading the [CST4 program](#). The Pāli text is divided into six portions for recitation (*bhāṇavāra*), which Rhys Davids has used as natural breaks for six chapters. It is over twice the length of other long discourses in the Dīghanikāya.

In several places I have added the Pāli term in parenthesis. An index serves as a glossary of Pāli terms used in the translation.

The entire Pāli text is included for the benefit of those who know Pāli, or who want to learn it. Reading famous discourses side-by-side with a translation is the most enjoyable way to learn and familiarise oneself with sentence structure. It is no substitute for studying Pāli grammar, but it is a good way to start learning for those who find linguistic studies too daunting. At least, you will build up your vocabulary of common Pāli words and those stock phrases that are used frequently in the Tipiṭaka.

For the convenience of those who want to skip the Pāli, I have included a link on the paragraph numbers of the Pāli passages to the corresponding translation. Links from the paragraph numbers of the translation, link to the next numbered paragraph of the translation.

An Exposition of the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is not a single discourse like most others in the Suttanta Piṭaka, but an historical account of the last year or so of the Buddha's life. It is similar in style to the Vinaya Mahāvagga, which describes the period following the Buddha's Enlightenment, his first teaching of the Dhamma, the going forth of the first disciples, and the spreading of the Dhamma.

This discourse contains the Buddha's final instructions, thus it is very important for the preservation of the Buddha's dispensation. Every Buddhist should know about the important teachings contained in this Sutta.

The Sutta begins when the Blessed One was dwelling on Vulture's Peak near Rājagaha. At that time, King Ajātasattu wanted to wage war against the Vajjī, but he was not sure that he could defeat them. He therefore sent his minister, Vassakāra Brahmin, to the Buddha to find out, instructing him to listen attentively to what was said.

The Book of the Great Decease *Mahāparinibbāna Suttaṃ*

131. Evaṃ me suttaṃ — ekaṃ samayaṃ Bhagavā Rājagahe viharati gijjhakūte pabbate. Tena kho pana samayena rājā māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto vajjī abhiyātukāmo hoti. So evamāha — “Ahaṃ hime vajjī evaṃmahiddhike evaṃmahānubhāve ucchecchāmi vajjī, vināsessāmi vajjī, anayabyasanaṃ āpādessāmi vajjī”ti.

131. Thus have I heard. The Blessed One was once dwelling in Rājagaha, on the hill called the Vulture's Peak. Now at that time Ajātasattu, the son of the queen-consort of Videha origin, the king of Māgadha, was desirous of attacking the Vajjī; and he said to himself, “I will root out these Vajjī, mighty and powerful though they be, I will destroy these Vajjī, I will bring these Vajjī to utter ruin!”

132. Atha kho rājā māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto vassakāraṃ brāhmaṇaṃ magadhamahāmatthaṃ āmantesi — “Ehi tvaṃ, brāhmaṇa, yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkama; upasaṅkamitvā mama vacanena Bhagavato pāde sirasā vandāhi, appābādhaṃ appātākaṃ lahuṭṭhānaṃ balaṃ phāsuvihāraṃ puccha — ‘Rājā, bhante, māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto Bhagavato pāde sirasā vandati, appābādhaṃ

appātāṅkaṃ lahuṭṭhānaṃ balaṃ phāsuvihāraṃ pucchatī'ti. Evañca vadehi — 'Rājā, bhante, māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto vajji abhiyātukāmo. So evamāha — "Ahaṃ hime vajji evaṇmahiddhike evaṇmahānubhāve ucchecchāmi vajji, vināsessāmi vajji, anayabyasanaṃ āpādessāmi"'ti. Yathā te Bhagavā byākaroti, taṃ sādhukaṃ uggahetoā mama āroceyyāsi. Na hi Tathāgatā vitathaṃ bhaṇantī'ti.

132. So he spoke to the Brahmin Vassakāra, the prime-minister of Māgadha, saying: "Come now, Brahmin, do you go to the Blessed One, and bow down in adoration at his feet on my behalf, and enquire in my name whether he is free from illness and suffering, and in the enjoyment of ease and comfort, and vigorous health. Then tell him that Ajātasattu, son of the Vedehi queen,¹ the king of Māgadha, in his eagerness to attack the Vajji, has resolved, 'I will root out these Vajji, mighty and powerful though they be, I will destroy these Vajji, I will bring these Vajji to utter ruin!' Bear carefully in mind whatever the Blessed One may predict, and repeat it to me, for the Buddhas speak nothing untrue!"

Why was King Ajātasattu so annoyed with the Vajji that he wanted to wage war and wipe them out? In the Commentary to this Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, Buddhaghosa gives the following account.²

There was a port (*paṭṭanaḡāmaṃ*) on the Ganges, extending over one league, half of which territory belonged to Ajātasattu,³ and the other half to the Licchavī.⁴ Nearby was a mountain, from which goods of great value (*mahagghabhāṇḍaṃ*) descended down the river. While Ajātasattu was making preparations to claim his share, the Licchavī would go before him and remove it all. This happened on several occasions, and Ajātasattu vowed vengeance.

So nothing unusual there — the war was waged over valuable property.

Vassakāra the Brahmin (*Vassakārabrahmaṇo*)

133. *"Evaṃ, bho'ti kho vassakāro brāhmaṇo magadhamahāmatto rañño māgadhasa Ajātasattussa vedehiputtassa paṭissutvā bhaddāni bhaddāni yānāni*

¹ The wise queen, wife of King Bimbisāra. Ajātasattu had committed the heinous crime of killing his own father to gain the throne, urged on by Devadatta.

² DA.ii.516f.

³ Ajātasattu's kingdom of Māgadha, and the territory of the Vajji (or Licchavī) were on opposite banks of the Ganges.

⁴ Their capital was Vesālī, and they formed a part of the Vajji confederacy, being often referred to as the Vajji (*q.v.*)

yojetvā bhaddaṃ bhaddaṃ yānaṃ abhiruhitvā bhaddehi bhaddehi yānehi Rājagahamhā niyyāsi, yena gijjhakūto pabbato tena pāyāsi. Yāvaticā yānassa bhūmi, yānena gantvā, yānā paccorohitvā pattikova yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamtvā Bhagavatā saddhiṃ sammodi. Sammodanīyaṃ kathaṃ sārāṇīyaṃ vītisāretvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho vassakāro brāhmaṇo magadhamahāmatto Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Rājā, bho Gotama, māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto bhoto Gotamassa pāde sirasā vandati, appābādhaṃ appātānikaṃ lahutthānaṃ balaṃ phāsuvihāraṃ pucchati. Rājā, bho Gotama, māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto vajjī abhiyātukāmo. So evamāha — ‘Ahaṃ hime vajjī evaṃmahiddhike evaṃmahānubhāve ucchecchāmi vajjī, vināsessāmi vajjī, anayabyasanaṃ āpādessāmi’”ti.

133. Then the Brahmin Vassakāra, heeded the words of the king, saying, “Be it as you say,” and ordering a number of magnificent carriages to be made ready, he mounted one of them, left Rājagaha with his entourage, and went to the Vulture’s Peak, riding as far as the ground was passable for carriages, and then alighting and proceeding on foot to the place where the Blessed One was. On arriving there he exchanged with the Blessed One the greetings and compliments of friendship and civility, sat down respectfully by his side [and then delivered to him the message even as the king had commanded].¹

Factors for the Non-decline of Rulers (Rāja Aparihāniyadhammā)

134. Tena kho pana samayena āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato piṭṭhito ṭhito hoti Bhagavantaṃ bījāyamāno. Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Kinti te, Ānanda, suttaṃ, ‘Vajjī abhiṅgaṃ sannipātā sannipātābahulā’ti? ‘Suttaṃ metaṃ, bhante — ‘Vajjī abhiṅgaṃ sannipātā sannipātābahulā’”ti. “Yāvokīvaṅca, Ānanda, vajjī abhiṅgaṃ sannipātā sannipātābahulā bhavissanti, vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjīnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

“Kinti te, Ānanda, suttaṃ, ‘Vajjī samaggā sannipatanti, samaggā vutṭhahanti, samaggā vajjikaraṇīyāni karonti’ti? ‘Suttaṃ metaṃ, bhante — ‘Vajjī samaggā sannipatanti, samaggā vutṭhahanti, samaggā vajjikaraṇīyāni karonti’”ti. “Yāvokīvaṅca, Ānanda, vajjī samaggā sannipatissanti, samaggā vutṭhahissanti, samaggā vajjikaraṇīyāni karissanti, vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjīnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

¹ Rhys Davids uses the words in square brackets to avoid repeating passages that are repeated verbatim in the Pāli text. Repetitions and stock phrases are not a problem for teachings memorised by heart and handed down orally — they aid memorisation.

“Kinti te, Ānanda, sutam, ‘Vajji apaññattam na paññapenti, paññattam na samucchindanti, yathāpaññatte porāṇe vajjidhamme samādāya vattanti”’ti? “Sutam metam, bhante — ‘Vajji apaññattam na paññapenti, paññattam na samucchindanti, yathāpaññatte porāṇe vajjidhamme samādāya vattanti”’ti. “Yāvokīvañca, Ānanda, ‘Vajji apaññattam na paññapessanti, paññattam na samucchindissanti, yathāpaññatte porāṇe vajjidhamme samādāya vattissanti, vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjinam pātikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Kinti te, Ānanda, sutam, ‘Vajji ye te vajjinam vajjimahallakā, te sakkaronti garuṃ karonti mānenti pūjenti, tesañca sotabbaṃ maññanti”’ti? “Sutam metam, bhante — ‘Vajji ye te vajjinam vajjimahallakā, te sakkaronti garuṃ karonti mānenti pūjenti, tesañca sotabbaṃ maññanti”’ti. “Yāvokīvañca, Ānanda, vajji ye te vajjinam vajjimahallakā, te sakkarissanti garuṃ karissanti mānessanti pūjessanti, tesañca sotabbaṃ maññissanti, vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjinam pātikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Kinti te, Ānanda, sutam, ‘Vajji yā tā kulitthiyo kulakumāriyo, tā na okkassa pasayha vāsenti”’ti? “Sutam metam, bhante — ‘Vajji yā tā kulitthiyo kulakumāriyo tā na okkassa pasayha vāsenti”’ti. “Yāvokīvañca, Ānanda, vajji yā tā kulitthiyo kulakumāriyo, tā na okkassa pasayha vāsessanti, vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjinam pātikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Kinti te, Ānanda, sutam, ‘Vajji yāni tāni vajjinam vajjicetiyaṇi abbhantarāni ceva bāhirāni ca, tāni sakkaronti garuṃ karonti mānenti pūjenti, tesañca dinnapubbaṃ katapubbaṃ dhammikaṃ baliṃ no parihāpentī”’ti? “Sutam metam, bhante — ‘Vajji yāni tāni vajjinam vajjicetiyaṇi abbhantarāni ceva bāhirāni ca, tāni sakkaronti garuṃ karonti mānenti pūjenti tesañca dinnapubbaṃ katapubbaṃ dhammikaṃ baliṃ no parihāpentī”’ti. “Yāvokīvañca, Ānanda, vajji yāni tāni vajjinam vajjicetiyaṇi abbhantarāni ceva bāhirāni ca, tāni sakkarissanti garuṃ karissanti mānessanti pūjessanti, tesañca dinnapubbaṃ katapubbaṃ dhammikaṃ baliṃ no parihāpessanti, vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjinam pātikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Kinti te, Ānanda, sutam, ‘Vajjinam arahantesu dhammikā rakkhāvaraṇagutti susaṃvohitā, kinti anāgatā ca arahanto vijitam āgaccheyyūṃ, āgatā ca arahanto vijite phāsu vihareyyu”’nti? “Sutam metam, bhante ‘Vajjinam arahantesu dhammikā rakkhāvaraṇagutti susaṃvohitā kinti anāgatā ca arahanto vijitam āgaccheyyūṃ, āgatā ca arahanto vijite phāsu vihareyyu”’nti. “Yāvokīvañca, Ānanda, vajjinam arahantesu dhammikā rakkhāvaraṇagutti susaṃvohitā bhavissati, kinti anāgatā ca arahanto vijitam āgaccheyyūṃ, āgatā ca arahanto vijite phāsu vihareyyunti. Vuddhiyeva, Ānanda, vajjinam pātikañkhā, no parihāni”’ti.

134. Now at that time the Venerable Ānanda was standing behind the Blessed One, and fanning him, and the Blessed One said to him: “Have you heard, Ānanda, that the Vajji hold full and frequent public assemblies?”

“Venerable sir, I have heard that is so,” he replied.

“So long, Ānanda,” replied the Blessed One, “as the Vajji hold full and frequent public assemblies; so long may they be expected not to decline, but to prosper.”

[Questioning the Venerable Ānanda in the same way, and receiving a similar reply, the Blessed One declared as follows the other conditions that would ensure the welfare of the Vajji confederacy.]

“So long, Ānanda, as the Vajji meet together in concord, and rise in concord, and carry out their undertakings in concord — so long as they enact nothing not already established, abrogate nothing that has been already enacted, and act in accordance with the ancient institutions of the Vajji as established in former days — so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajji elders, and hold it a point of duty to hearken to their words — so long as no women or girls belonging to their clans are detained among them by force or abduction — so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajji shrines in town or country, and allow not the proper offerings and rites, as formerly given and performed, to fall into desuetude — so long as the rightful protection, defence, and support shall be fully provided for the Arahants among them, so that Arahants from a distance may enter the realm, and the Arahants therein may live at ease — so long may the Vajji be expected not to decline, but to prosper.’

135. *Atha kho Bhagavā vassakāraṃ brāhmaṇaṃ magadhamahāmattaṃ āmantesi — “Ekamidāhaṃ, brāhmaṇa, samayaṃ Vesāliyaṃ viharāmi sārandaḍe cetiye. Tatrāhaṃ vajjīnaṃ ime satta aparihāniye dhamme desesiṃ. Yāvokīvañca, brāhmaṇa, ime satta aparihāniyā dhammā vajjīsu ṭhassanti, imesu ca sattasu aparihāniyesu dhammesu vajjī sandissisanti, vuddhiyeva, brāhmaṇa, vajjīnaṃ pātikañkhā, no parihāni”ti.*

Evam vutte, vassakāro brāhmaṇo magadhamahāmatto Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Ekamekenapi, bho Gotama, aparihāniyena dhammena samannāgatānaṃ vajjīnaṃ vuddhiyeva pātikañkhā, no parihāni. Ko pana vādo sattahi aparihāniyehi dhammehi. Akaraṇīyāva, bho Gotama, vajjī raññā māgadheṇa Ajātasattunā vedehiputtēna yadidaṃ yuddhassa, aññatra upalāpanāya aññatra mithubhedā. Handa ca dāni mayaṃ, bho Gotama, gacchāma, bahukiccā mayaṃ bahukaraṇīyā”ti. “Yassadāni tvaṃ, brāhmaṇa, kālaṃ maññasi”ti. Atha kho

vassakāro brāhmaṇo magadhamahāmatto Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanditvā anumoditvā utthāyāsanaṃ pakkāmi.

135. Then the Blessed One addressed Vassakāra the Brahmin, saying: “Brahmin, when I was once staying at Vesālī at the Sārāndada shrine (*cetiya*), I taught the Vajjī these conditions of welfare;¹ and so long as those conditions shall continue to exist among the Vajjī, so long as the Vajjī shall be well instructed in those conditions, so long may we expect them not to decline, but to prosper.”

“We may expect then,” answered the Brahmin, “the welfare and not the decline of the Vajjī when they are possessed of any one of these conditions of welfare, how much more so when they are possessed of all the seven. So, Gotama, the Vajjī cannot be overcome by the king of Māgadha; that is, not in battle, without diplomacy or breaking up their alliance. Now, Gotama, we must go; we are busy, and have much to do.”

“Whatever you think most fitting, O Brahmin,” was the reply. The Brahmin Vassakāra, delighted and pleased with the words of the Blessed One, rose from his seat, and went his way.

The Buddha's reply describes the seven things for the prosperity and non-decline of rulers. As long as these seven things were found in the Vajjī they would be liable to prosper, not to decline. The Vajjī kingdom lay to the north-east of the Ganges, at the eastern extreme of the Middle Country of India (Majjhimadesa). It seems to have been a democratic republic rather than a kingdom like most of the other regions of India at that time. The Buddha's advice is a conservative one — respect the elders, women, and monks, don't change regulations that are well-established, and meet together frequently to discuss matters that require attention.

The same seven things will protect present-day governments too, and should be followed by societies and organisations that want to prosper and overcome their enemies and detractors. Modern parliaments are rather discordant and adversarial. In extreme cases, one sees fights breaking out in parliaments over controversial debates. That kind of behaviour does not augur well for the prosperity of any nation. It is vital to learn how to debate and come to a consensus, without sowing discord and distrust.

Factors for the Non-decline of Monks (*Bhikkhu Aparihāniyadhammā*)

136. *Atha kho Bhagavā acirapakkante vassakāre brāhmaṇe magadhamahāmatte āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Gaccha tvam, Ānanda, yāvaticā bhikkhū*

¹ A.iv.16. The Sārāndada Sutta.

Rājagahaṃ upanissāya viharanti, te sabbe upatṭhānasālāyaṃ sannipātehi"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā yāvaticā bhikkhū Rājagahaṃ upanissāya viharanti, te sabbe upatṭhānasālāyaṃ sannipātetvā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamtvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ atthāsi. Ekamantaṃ tṭhito kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etadavoca — "Sannipatito, bhante, bhikkhusaṅgho, yassadāni, bhante, Bhagavā kālaṃ maññati"ti.

Atha kho Bhagavā utthāyāsanaṃ yena upatṭhānasālā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamtvā paññatte āsane nisīdi. Nisajja kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — "Satta vo, bhikkhave, aparihāniye dhamme desessāmi, taṃ suṇātha, sādhukaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmi"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho te bhikkhū Bhagavato paccassuṃ. Bhagavā etadavoca —

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū abhinhaṃ sannipātā sannipātabahulā bhavissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū samaggā sannipatissanti, samaggā vutṭhahissanti, samaggā saṅghakaraṇīyāni karissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū apaññattaṃ na paññapessanti, paññattaṃ na samucchindissanti, yathāpaññattesu sikkhāpadesu samādāya vattissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū ye te bhikkhū therā rattaññū cirapabbajitā saṅghapitaro saṅghapariṇāyakā, te sakkarissanti garuṃ karissanti mānessanti pūjessanti, tesaṅca sotabbaṃ maññissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū uppannāya taṇhāya ponobbhavikāya na vasaṃ gacchissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū āraññakesu senāsanesu sāpekkhā bhavissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū paccattaññeva satim upatṭhapessanti — 'Kinti anāgatā ca pesalā sabrahmacārī āgaccheyyuṃ, āgatā ca pesalā sabrahmacārī phāsu vihareyyu'nti. Vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

"Yāvakīvaṅca, bhikkhave, ime satta aparihāniyā dhammā bhikkhūsu tṭhassanti, imesu ca sattu aparihāniyesu dhammesu bhikkhū sandississanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikaṅkhā, no parihāni.

136. Now soon after he had gone the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: “Go now, Ānanda, and assemble in the Service Hall such of the monks as live in the neighbourhood of Rājagaha.”

He did so, and returned to the Blessed One, and informed him, saying: “The company of the monks, Venerable sir, is assembled, let the Blessed One do as he deems fit.”

The Blessed One arose, and went to the Service Hall; and when he was seated, he addressed the monks, saying: “I will teach you, monks, seven conditions of the welfare of a community. Listen and pay careful attention, and I will speak.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said the monks in assent to the Blessed One; and he spoke as follows: “So long, monks, as the monks meet together in full and frequent assemblies — so long as they meet together in concord, and rise in concord, and carry out the duties of the Order in concord — so long as the monks establish nothing that has not been already prescribed, and abrogate nothing that has been already established, and act in accordance with the rules of the Order as now laid down — so long as the monks honour and esteem and revere and support the elders of experience and long-standing, the fathers and leaders of the Saṅgha and hold it a point of duty to heed their words — so long as the monks do not fall under the influence of that craving which, springing up within them, would give rise to renewed existence — so long as the monks delight in a life of solitude — so long as the monks train their minds so that well-behaved companions in the holy life (*pesalā sabrahmacārī*) shall come to them, and those who have come shall dwell at ease. As long as the monks establish these seven things in themselves, they can be expected to prosper, not to decline.

The advice for the monks given by the Buddha is similar to that given to the Vajjī. It is conservative, showing respect to the elders and the traditions, not establishing new regulations, nor revoking the established ones. It also advises to live a life of contentment and solitude, not craving material things, fame, or influence, which only foment discord and dissatisfaction. Nowadays, this advice is seldom heeded. Many monks advocate changing the Vinaya rules to suit modern times. Some crave wealth, fame, and influence. A few even go so far as to get involved in politics. This behaviour is remote from the ideals of a recluse or alms mendicant, who depends on charity.

It is my opinion that accepting and using money is one of the primary causes, if not the main cause, for the decline in the modern Saṅgha. Those forest monks who practice meditation, and strive to develop morality, concentration, and wisdom, have no dealings

with money. If lay Buddhists want to have well-behaved monks to learn from, they should provide their material needs, and never offer cash to bhikkhus, which is very damaging to the Buddha's dispensation, and is, in fact, a **demeritorious deed**.

137. *“Aparepi vo, bhikkhave, satta aparihāniye dhamme desessāmi, taṃ suṇātha, sādhukaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmi”*ti. *“Evaṃ, bhante”*ti kho te bhikkhū *Bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etadavoca —*

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na kammārāmā bhavissanti na kammaratā na kammārāmatamanuyuttā, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na bhassārāmā bhavissanti na bhassaratā na bhassārāmatamanuyuttā, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na niddārāmā bhavissanti na niddāratā na niddārāmatamanuyuttā, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na saṅgaṇikārāmā bhavissanti na saṅgaṇikaratā na saṅgaṇikārāmatamanuyuttā, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na pāpicchā bhavissanti na pāpikānaṃ icchānaṃ vasaṃ gatā, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na pāpamittā bhavissanti na pāpasahāyā na pāpasampavañkā, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū na oramattakena visesādhigamena antarāvosaṇaṃ āpajjissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, ime satta aparihāniyā dhammā bhikkhūsu ṭhassanti, imesu ca sattu aparihāniyesu dhammesu bhikkhū sandissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

137. “I will teach you, monks, another seven factors of non-decline. Please listen attentively.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said the monks in assent to the Blessed One; and he spoke as follows: “So long as the monks do not delight in, take pleasure in, nor get absorbed in activity (*kamma*) — so long as the monks do not delight

in, take pleasure in, nor get absorbed in idle talk — so long as the monks do not delight in, take pleasure in, nor get absorbed in sleeping — so long as the monks do not delight in, take pleasure in, nor get absorbed in socialising — so long as the monks do not entertain and fall under the influence of evil desires — so long as the monks do not become the friends, companions, or intimates of evil friends — so long as the monks do not come to a stop on their way [to nibbāna] because they have attained to any lesser thing — so long may the monks be expected not to decline, but to prosper. So long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the monks, so long as they are instructed in these conditions, so long may the monks be expected not to decline, but to prosper.”

The Commentary on the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta explains activity as searching out (*cīvaravicāraṇaṃ*) or making robes (*cīvarakaraṇaṃ*), reclining boards (*upattthambhānaṃ*), needle-cases (*sūcighāraṃ*), bowl covers (*pattatthavikāṃ*), straps (*asaṃbaddhikāṃ*), belts (*kāyabandhānaṃ*), bellows? (*dhamakaraṇaṃ*), lecterns (*ādhiāraṃ*), footstools (*pādakathalīkāṃ*), or broom-handles (*sammajjanī-ādīnaṃ*). It goes on to say that rehearsing the texts, attending to shrines, etc., is not called “delighting in activity.”

Thus, there are certain duties that a bhikkhu should perform such as keeping his robes and dwelling place clean and in good repair, attending on senior bhikkhus, caring for sick monks, and many other duties that are not called “delighting in activity.” Here, it is appropriate to tell the story of Sammajjana Thera from the Dhammapada Commentary.

A monk was constantly sweeping the rooms of the monastery. He criticised the Elder Revata who was always meditating. The elder advised him to sweep the monastery before almsround, and to spend the day in meditation, sweeping again in the evening if he wished. He followed this advice and in due course attained Arahantship. When rubbish started to accumulate, the other monks asked him why he didn’t sweep any more. The elder replied that he was no longer heedless, therefore he didn’t spend all his time sweeping. The monks wondered if he had attained Arahantship and told the Buddha what he had said. Concerning his change of attitude, the Buddha uttered this verse (Dhp v 172)

*“Whoever was heedless before and afterwards is not;
such a one illuminates this world like the moon freed from clouds.”*

There are two main duties for bhikkhus: the duty of learning (*ganthadhura*) and the duty of insight (*vipassanādhura*). The duty of learning includes the study of Pāli, learning some Suttas by heart, reciting protection discourses, explaining and teaching the Dhamma, writing books, giving lectures, answering questions on the Dhamma,

and so forth. In modern times, this may require the use of computers and the Internet, but it is plain that this duty can soon degenerate into “delighting in activity” and get diverted from its intended purpose of explaining and teaching the Dhamma.

The other duty is to practise insight meditation, and that also includes the development of tranquillity meditation (*samathā*), which may serve as a basis for insight.

In brief, monks should not be lazy — there are many duties that they should fulfil. As their basic needs are provided by pious lay supporters, and they have no relatives to support, they have plenty of time to study, teach, and meditate.

138. *“Aparepi vo, bhikkhave, satta aparihāniye dhamme desessāmi ... Yāvakīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū saddhā bhavissanti ... Hirimanā bhavissanti ... Ottappī bhavissanti ... Bahussutā bhavissanti ... āradhāvīriyā bhavissanti ... Upaṭṭhitassatī bhavissanti ... Paññavanto bhavissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni. Yāvakīvañca, bhikkhave, ime satta aparihāniyā dhammā bhikkhūsu ṭhassanti, imesu ca sattasu aparihāniyesu dhammesu bhikkhū sandissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.*

138. “I will teach you, monks, another seven factors of non-decline. Please listen attentively.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said the monks in assent to the Blessed One; and he spoke as follows: “So long as the monks practise with confidence (*saddhā*) ... with shame of wrong doing (*hiri*) ... with fear of wrong doing (*ottappa*) ... with learning (*bahussutā*) ... with vigorous effort (*āradhāvīriyā*) ... with established mindfulness (*upaṭṭhitassatī*) ... with wisdom (*paññavanto*), they can be expected to prosper, not to decline. As long as the monks establish these seven things in themselves, they can be expected to prosper, not to decline.

139. *“Aparepi vo, bhikkhave, satta aparihāniye dhamme desessāmi, taṃ suṇātha, sādhukaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmi”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho te bhikkhū Bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etadavoca —*

“Yāvakīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhu satisambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti ... Dhammavicasambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti ... Vīriyasambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti ... Pīṭisambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti ... Passaddhisambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti ... Samādhisambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti ... Upekkhāsambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāvessanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, ime satta aparihāniyā dhammā bhikkhūsu ṭhassanti, imesu ca sattasu aparihāniyesu dhammesu bhikkhū sandississanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā no parihāni.

139. “I will teach you, monks, another seven factors of non-decline. Please listen attentively.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said the monks in assent to the Blessed One; and he spoke as follows: “So long as the monks develop the enlightenment factor of mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*) ... the enlightenment factor of investigation (*dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*) ... the enlightenment factor of energy (*vīriya-sambojjhaṅga*) ... the enlightenment factor of joy (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*) ... the enlightenment factor of serenity (*passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*) ... the enlightenment factor of concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*) ... the enlightenment factor of equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*), they can be expected to prosper, not to decline. As long as the monks establish these seven things in themselves, they can be expected to prosper, not to decline.

140. *“Aparepi vo, bhikkhave, satta aparihāniye dhamme desessāmi, taṃ suṇātha, sādhukaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmi”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho te bhikkhū Bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etadavoca —*

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū aniccaesaññaṃ bhāvevessanti ... Anattasaññaṃ bhāvevessanti ... Asubhasaññaṃ bhāvevessanti ... Ādinavasaññaṃ bhāvevessanti ... Pahānasaññaṃ bhāvevessanti ... Virāgasaññaṃ bhāvevessanti ... Nirodhasaññaṃ bhāvevessanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

“Yāvokīvañca, bhikkhave, ime satta aparihāniyā dhammā bhikkhūsu ṭhassanti, imesu ca sattasu aparihāniyesu dhammesu bhikkhū sandississanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.

140. “I will teach you, monks, another seven factors of non-decline. Please listen attentively.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said the monks in assent to the Blessed One; and he spoke as follows: “So long as the monks cultivate the perception of impermanence ... the perception of not-self ... the perception of repulsiveness ... the perception of danger ... the perception of abandonment ... the perception of dispassion ... the perception of cessation they can be expected to prosper, not to decline.

As long as the monks establish these seven things in themselves, they can be expected to prosper, not to decline.

141. “*Cha, vo bhikkhave, aparihāniye dhamme desessāmi, taṃ suṇātha, sādhukaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmi*”ti. “*Evaṃ, bhante*”ti kho te bhikkhū *Bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etada voca —*

“*Yāvakaivañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū mettaṃ kāyakammaṃ paccupaṭṭhāpessanti sabrahmacārīsu āvi ceva raho ca, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.*

“*Yāvakaivañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū mettaṃ vacikammaṃ paccupaṭṭhāpessanti ... Mettaṃ manokammaṃ paccupaṭṭhāpessanti sabrahmacārīsu āvi ceva raho ca, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.*

“*Yāvakaivañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū, ye te lābhā dhammikā dhammaladdhā antamaso pattapariyāpannamattampi tathārūpehi lābhehi appaṭivibhattabhogī bhavissanti silavantehi sabrahmacārīhi sādharāṇabhogī, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.*

“*Yāvakaivañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū yāni kāni silāni akhaṇḍāni acchiddāni asabalāni akammāsāni bhujissāni viññūpasatthāni aparāmaṭṭhāni samādhi-saṃvattanikāni tathārūpesu sīlesu silasāmaññagatā viharissanti sabrahmacārīhi āvi ceva raho ca, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.*

“*Yāvakaivañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhū yāyaṃ ditṭhi ariyā niyyānikā, niyyāti takkarassa sammā dukkhakkhayāya, tathārūpāya ditṭhiyā ditṭhisāmaññagatā viharissanti sabrahmacārīhi āvi ceva raho ca, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni.*

“*Yāvakaivañca, bhikkhave, ime cha aparihāniyā dhammā bhikkhūsu ṭhassanti, imesu ca chasu aparihāniyesu dhammesu bhikkhū sandissanti, vuddhiyeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ pāṭikañkhā, no parihāni*”ti.

141. “I will teach you, monks, another six factors of non-decline. Please listen attentively.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said the monks in assent to the Blessed One; and he spoke as follows: “So long as the monks show loving-kindness both in public and in private towards their fellow monks by body ... by speech ... by thought ... as long as they share their lawfully acquired gifts even including the contents of their almsbowls. As long as they maintain perfectly without any stain or blemish the rules of conduct, which are conducive to concentration and liberation. As long as they maintain the noble view that leads to the utter destruction of suffering, they can be expected to prosper, not to decline.

142. *Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā Rājagahe viharanto gijjhakūṭe pabbate etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti — “Iti sīlaṃ, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvita paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsava, bhavāsava, avijjāsava”ti.*

142. Then whilst the Blessed One stayed there at Rājagaha on the Vulture’s Peak he gave that comprehensive religious talk with the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. “Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions (*āsava*), that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality (*kāmāsava*), from the corruption of becoming (*bhavāsava*), and from the corruption of ignorance (*avijjāsava*).”

143. *Atha kho Bhagavā Rājagahe yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmañānanda, yena ambalaṭṭhikā tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena ambalaṭṭhikā tadavasari. Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā ambalaṭṭhikāyaṃ viharati rājāgārake. Tatrāpi sudaṃ Bhagavā ambalaṭṭhikāyaṃ viharanto rājāgārake etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti — “Iti sīlaṃ, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvita paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsava, bhavāsava, avijjāsava”ti.*

143. Having stayed at Rājagaha as long as he wished, the Blessed One said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come Ānanda, let us go to **Ambalaṭṭhikā**.¹ So they went there with a large number of monks. At Ambalaṭṭhikā the Blessed One stayed at the royal park and there gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. “Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance.”

144. *Atha kho Bhagavā ambalaṭṭhikāyaṃ yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmañānanda, yena nālandā*

¹ Most famous as the location where the Buddha taught the **Ambalaṭṭhikarāhulovāda Sutta** to his young son Rāhula about the importance of truthfulness.

tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena nālandā tadavasari, tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā nālandāyaṃ viharati pāvārikambavane.

144. Having stayed at Ambalaṭṭhikā as long as he wished, the Blessed One said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come Ānanda, let us go to Nālanda.” “Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent. At Nālandā they stayed in Pāvārika's mango grove.¹

Venerable Sāriputta's Lion's Roar (Sāriputtasihanādo)

145. Atha kho āyasmā Sāriputto yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamito vā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Sāriputto Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Evaṃ pasanno ahaṃ, bhante, Bhagavati; na cāhu na ca bhavissati na ceta-rahi vijjati añño samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā Bhagavatā bhīyyobhiññataro yadidaṃ sambodhiya”nti. “Uḷārā kho te ayaṃ, Sāriputta, āsabhī vācā bhāsītā, ekaṃso gahito, sihanādo nadito — ‘Evaṃpasanno ahaṃ, bhante, Bhagavati; na cāhu na ca bhavissati na ceta-rahi vijjati añño samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā Bhagavatā bhīyyobhiññataro yadidaṃ sambodhiya’nti.

“Kiṃ te, Sāriputta, ye te ahesuṃ atītamaddhānaṃ arahanto sammāsambuddhā, sabbe te Bhagavanto cetasā ceto paricca viditā — ‘Evaṃsilā te Bhagavanto ahesuṃ itipi, evaṃdhammā evaṃpaññā evaṃvihārī evaṃvimuttā te Bhagavanto ahesuṃ itipi’”ti? “No hetam, bhante.”

“Kiṃ pana te, Sāriputta, ye te bhavissanti anāgatamaddhānaṃ arahanto sammāsambuddhā, sabbe te Bhagavanto cetasā ceto paricca viditā — ‘Evaṃsilā te Bhagavanto bhavissanti itipi, evaṃdhammā evaṃpaññā evaṃvihārī evaṃvimuttā te Bhagavanto bhavissanti itipi’”ti? “No hetam, bhante.”

“Kiṃ pana te, Sāriputta, ahaṃ etarahaṃ araham sammāsambuddho cetasā ceto paricca vidito — ‘Evaṃsilo Bhagavā itipi, evaṃdhammo evaṃpañño evaṃvihārī evaṃvimutto Bhagavā itipi’”ti? “No hetam, bhante.”

“Ettha ca hi te, Sāriputta, atītānāgatapaccuppannesu arahantesu sammā-sambuddhesu cetopariyaññaṃ natthi. Atha kiñcaraḥi te ayaṃ, Sāriputta, uḷārā āsabhī vācā bhāsītā, ekaṃso gahito, sihanādo nadito — ‘Evaṃpasanno ahaṃ, bhante, Bhagavati; na cāhu na ca bhavissati na ceta-rahi vijjati añño samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā Bhagavatā bhīyyobhiññataro yadidaṃ sambodhiya’nti?

¹ The location where the Buddha taught the [Kevaṭṭa Sutta](#) and the [Upāli Sutta](#).

145. The Venerable Sāriputta came to where the Blessed One was, and having paid homage, took his seat respectfully at one side, saying: “Venerable sir! I have such faith in the Blessed One, that I think there never has been, nor will there be, nor is there now any other, whether a recluse or a Brahmin, who is greater and wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards the higher wisdom.”

“Grand and bold are your words, Sāriputta: you have spoken with a bull’s voice and roared a lion’s roar! Do you then comprehend with your mind the minds of all the Blessed Ones who in ages past have been Arahant Buddhas, are you aware what their conduct was, what was their teaching, what was their wisdom, what their mode of life, and what liberation they attained?”

“Indeed not, Venerable sir!”

“Do you then comprehend with your mind the minds of all the Blessed Ones who in the future will be Arahant Buddhas, are you aware what their conduct will be, what will be their teaching, their wisdom, their mode of life, and what liberation they will attain?”

“Indeed not, Venerable sir!”

“Do you then comprehend with your mind the mind of the Arahant Buddha now alive, are you aware what the Blessed One’s conduct is, what is his teaching, his wisdom, his mode of life, and what liberation he has attained?”

“Indeed not, Venerable sir!”

“Then, Sāriputta, you do not know the minds of the Arahant Buddhas of the past, the present, nor of the future. Why, then, are your words so grand and bold? Why do you speak with a bull’s voice and roar the lion’s roar?”

146. *“Na kho me, bhante, atītānāgatapaccuppannesu arahantesu sammā-sambuddhesu cetopariyañāṇaṃ atthi, api ca me dhammanvayo vidito. Seyyathāpi, bhante, rañño paccantimaṃ nagaraṃ dalhuddhāpaṃ dalhapākāraṭoraṇaṃ ekadvāraṃ, tatrassa dovāriko paṇḍito viyatto medhāvi aññātānaṃ nivāretā ñātānaṃ pavesetā. So tassa nagarassa samantā anupariyāyapathaṃ anukkamamāno na passeyya pākārasandhiṃ vā pākāravivaraṃ vā, antamaso bilāranikkhamanamattampi. Tassa evamassa — ‘Ye kho keci oḷārikā pāṇā imaṃ nagaraṃ pavisanti vā nikkhamanti vā, sabbe te imināva dvārena pavisanti vā nikkhamanti vā’ti. Evameva kho me, bhante, dhammanvayo vidito — ‘Ye te, bhante, ahesuṃ atītāmadhānaṃ arahanto sammāsambuddhā, sabbe te Bhagavanto pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalīkaraṇe catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu supatitṭhitaccitā sattabojjhaṅge yathābhūtaṃ bhāvetvā anuttaraṃ sammā-sambodhiṃ abhisambujjiṃsu. Yepi te, bhante, bhavissanti anāgatāmadhānaṃ arahanto sammāsambuddhā, sabbe te Bhagavanto pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso*

upakkilese paññāya dubbalikaraṇe catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu supatiṭṭhitacittā satta bojjaṅge yathābhūtaṃ bhāvetvā anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambujjhissanti. Bhagavāpi, bhante, etarahi arahaṃ sammāsambuddho pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalikaraṇe catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu supatiṭṭhitacitto satta bojjaṅge yathābhūtaṃ bhāvetvā anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddho”ti.

146. “Venerable sir! I do not have the knowledge of the minds of the Arahant Buddhas that existed in the past, will exist in the future, and exist now. I only know the lineage of the faith. Just, Venerable sir, as a king might have a border city, with strong foundations, walls, and with only one gate; and the king might have a watchman there, clever, expert, and wise, to stop all strangers and admit only friends. On inspecting the walls all around the city, he might inspect all the joints in the walls to know that there were no gaps where any creature bigger than a cat could get out. He would know that all living things larger than a cat that entered or left the city would have to do so by that gate. Thus only is it, Venerable sir, that I know the lineage of the faith. I know that the Arahant Buddhas of the past, abandoning the five hindrances; knowing all those mental faults that weaken wisdom; establishing their minds firmly in the four foundations of mindfulness; thoroughly developing the seven factors of enlightenment, attained incomparable Enlightenment. I know that the Arahant Buddhas of the times to come will do the same, and I know that the Blessed One, the Arahant Buddha of today has done so now.”

Venerable Sāriputta was the wisest of the Buddha's disciples. The Dhammapada verse 97 refers to him as an excellent man who is not credulous. When thirty forest monks came to pay their respects, the Buddha asked the Venerable Sāriputta whether he believed that cultivating and maturing the five spiritual faculties — confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom — could penetrate and culminate in the deathless. Venerable Sāriputta replied that he did not believe it. Since he had realised the Paths and Fruits he did not take it on faith in the Buddha. The monks talked among themselves that the elder had no faith in the Buddha. Then the Buddha explained that the Venerable Sāriputta was blameless as he had realised it through his personal experience, so he did not need to have faith in the word of another. In this extraordinary verse, the Buddha used shock tactics to awaken the thirty forest-dwelling monks to the truth.

*“Assaddho akataññū ca, sandhicchedo ca yo naro.
Hatāvakāso vantāso, sa ve uttamaporiso.”*

“The man who is not credulous,¹ who knows the uncreate,² who has cut off rebirth,³ who has destroyed all results,⁴ and expelled all desires,⁵ he is truly an excellent man.”⁶ (Dhp v 97)

He rightly inferred the great powers of the Buddha from his profound knowledge of the Dhamma taught by the Buddha, having practised that Dhamma and personally experienced the bliss of nibbāna by attaining Arahanthood. The account in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is just the first part of the “Discourse on Serene Faith” in which Venerable Sāriputta expounds the powers of the Tathāgata in some detail. It shows the method used by an intelligent person who should examine any religious teaching thoroughly. It also shows that some things should be accepted though they are beyond our personal direct knowledge. We should change our behaviour, speech, thought, and view accordingly, having inferred the right conclusion.

A hardened sceptic may say, “How can we believe that Sāriputta had gained Arahanthood?” or “How can we know that the discourses have not just been made up by someone?” As long as they do not practise the Dhamma properly, they will never be able to gain confidence in it, because it is beyond logical reasoning and speculation.

Studying the original discourses will help, but there is no substitute for personal realisation. At least one should practise insight meditation to the level of “Purification by Overcoming Doubt.” Then one will know how to infer, “This is surely the teaching of the Blessed One” because one has acquired the taste of Dhamma. Those Buddhists who have never practised meditation properly, entertain doubts about the Dhamma and so visit astrologers or non-Buddhist teachers looking for something easier than observing moral purity, gaining concentration, and developing wisdom.

To follow the Middle Path is not easy — one must avoid sensual indulgence, which most people are very attached to, and one must avoid wrong views too. There is no

¹ Taken at face value, this verse is very shocking, but the key words all have double-meanings. *Assaddho* literally means “without confidence” i.e. a non-believer, but here it means one who is not credulous.

² *Akataññū* means “ungrateful,” literally one who does not know what has been done for his benefit, but here it means one who knows (*aññū*) that which is not created (*akata*).

³ *Sandhicchedo* means one who breaks the connection between houses, a burglar, but here it means an Arahant who won’t be reborn again because he has broken the connection between existences.

⁴ *Hatāvakāso* means one who has ruined his life, but here it refers to the Arahant who has destroyed all future results.

⁵ *Vantāso* or *vantāsiko* is a kind of hungry ghost (*peta*) that feeds on vomit, but here means one who has ‘vomited’ or expelled all desire.

⁶ *Uttamapuriso* means the best of men, but could also mean “one who thinks that he is superior to others” i.e. a conceited person.

substitute for the correct and strenuous practice of the Noble Eightfold Path, which means insight meditation aimed at the realisation of nibbāna in this very life. Those who put off the practice of meditation for their old age, until the next life, or think that they do not need to practise meditation, have fallen into wrong views.

Charity and good works alone cannot lead to nibbāna. Morality is unstable and imperfect unless it is protected by concentration and wisdom. Even modern materialists and non-Buddhists practise charity and observe morality, a Buddhist must meditate too. Right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right thought, and right view are essential, otherwise, one will not be able to practise right speech, right action, and right livelihood. One will not even know what they are!

147. Tatrapi sudam Bhagavā nālandāyaṃ viharanto pāvārikambavane etadeva bahulam bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ katham karoti — “Iti sīlam, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvito paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā”ti.

147. While staying at Nālanda in the Pāvārika mango grove the Blessed One gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. “Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance.”

The Venerable Sāriputta did not follow the Buddha and the monks on his journey, but returned to the place of his birth where he would pass away after converting his mother, who had been opposed to the Buddha's teaching since all seven of her sons had become monks. See the account of the *Parinibbāna of Sāriputta* in the Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names.

The Dangers of Immorality (*Dussīla Ādinavā*)

148. Atha kho Bhagavā nālandāyaṃ yathābhirantaṃ viharito āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmañānanda, yena pāṭaligāmo tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena pāṭaligāmo tadavasari. Assosum kho pāṭaligāmikā upāsakā — “Bhagavā kira pāṭaligāmaṃ anupatto”ti. Atha kho pāṭaligāmikā upāsakā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamaṃsu; upasaṅkamito

Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisidim̐su. Ekamantaṃ nisinnā kho pāṭaligāmikā upāsakā Bhagavantam etadavocum̐ — “Adhivāsetu no, bhante, Bhagavā āvasathāgāra”nti. Adhivāsesi Bhagavā tuñhībhāvena. Atha kho pāṭaligāmikā upāsakā Bhagavato adhivāsanam̐ viditvā utthāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantam abhivādetvā padakkhiṇam̐ katvā yena āvasathāgāram̐ tenupasaṅkamim̐su; upasaṅkamitvā sabbasanthariṃ āvasathāgāram̐ santharivā āsanāni paññāpetvā udakamaṇikaṃ patitthāpetvā telapadīpaṃ āropetvā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamim̐su, upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantam̐ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ attham̐su. Ekamantaṃ thitā kho pāṭaligāmikā upāsakā Bhagavantam̐ etadavocum̐ — “Sabbasantharisanthataṃ, bhante, āvasathāgāram̐, āsanāni paññattāni, udakamaṇiko patitthāpito, telapadīpo āropito; yassadāni, bhante, Bhagavā kālam̐ maññatī”ti. Atha kho Bhagavā sāyanhasamayam̐. Nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena yena āvasathāgāram̐ tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā pāde pakkhāletvā āvasathāgāram̐ pavisitvā majjhimam̐ thambham̐ nissāya puratthābhimukho nisīdi. Bhikkhusaṅghopi kho pāde pakkhāletvā āvasathāgāram̐ pavisitvā pacchimaṃ bhittim̐ nissāya puratthābhimukho nisīdi Bhagavantameva purakkhatvā. Pāṭaligāmikāpi kho upāsakā pāde pakkhāletvā āvasathāgāram̐ pavisitvā puratthimaṃ bhittim̐ nissāya pacchimābhimukhā nisidim̐su Bhagavantameva purakkhatvā.

148. Now when the Blessed One had stayed as long as was convenient at Nālandā, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Pāṭaligāma.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent. Then the Blessed One proceeded, with a great company of monks, to Pāṭaligāma. Now the disciples at Pāṭaligāma heard of his arrival there, and they went to where he was, took their seats respectfully beside him, and invited him to their village rest house, and the Blessed One signified, by silence, his consent. Then the Pāṭaligāma disciples seeing that he had accepted the invitation, rose from their seats, and went away to the rest house, bowing to the Blessed One and keeping him on their right as they passed him. On arriving there they made the rest house fit in every way for occupation, placed seats in it, set up a water-pot, and fixed an oil lamp. Then they returned to the Blessed One, and bowing, stood beside him, saying: “All things are ready, Venerable sir! It is time for you to do whatever you see fit.” Then the Blessed One robed himself, took his robe and bowl, went with the monks to the rest house, washed his feet, entered the hall, and took his seat against the centre pillar, with his face towards the east. The monks also, after washing their feet, entered the hall, and took their seats around the Blessed One, against the

western wall, and facing the east. The disciples of Pāṭaligāma too, after washing their feet, entered the hall, and took their seats opposite the Blessed One, against the eastern wall, facing towards the west.

It makes sense to have the teaching monk sitting in the centre of the hall, where he can be heard by everyone without the aid of loudspeakers.

149. *Atha kho Bhagavā pāṭaligāmike upāsake āmantesi — “Pañcime, gahapatayo, ādīnavā dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā. Katame pañca? Idha, gahapatayo, dussīlo sīlavipanno pamādādhikaraṇaṃ mahatiṃ bhogajāniṃ nigacchati. Ayaṃ paṭhamo ādīnavo dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā.*

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, dussīlassa sīlavipannassa pāpako kittisaddo abbhuggacchati. Ayaṃ dutiyo ādīnavo dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā.

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, dussīlo sīlavipanno yaññadeva pariyaṃ upasaṅkamati — yadi khattiyapariyaṃ yadi brāhmaṇapariyaṃ yadi gahapatipariyaṃ yadi samaṇapariyaṃ — avisārado upasaṅkamati maṅkubhūto. Ayaṃ tatiyo ādīnavo dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā.

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, dussīlo sīlavipanno sammūlho kālaṅkaroti. Ayaṃ catuttho ādīnavo dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā.

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, dussīlo sīlavipanno kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā apāyaṃ duggatiṃ vinipātaṃ nirayaṃ upapajjati. Ayaṃ pañcamao ādīnavo dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā. Ime kho, gahapatayo, pañca ādīnavā dussīlassa sīlavipattiyā.

149. Then the Blessed One addressed the Pāṭaligāma disciples, saying: “Fivefold, householders, are the dangers for the immoral through his loss of morality.

1) In the first place due to the loss of morality the immoral suffer great dissipation of wealth through heedlessness. This is the first danger for the immoral through the loss of morality.”

Morality is of two kinds: restraint from evil deeds, and the fulfilment of skilful deeds. Restraint from evil deeds means the observance of the five precepts, *i.e.* abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, wrong speech, and taking intoxicants. Morality of good conduct is of many kinds. For householders it entails gainful employment in some form of right livelihood to provide for one’s own needs, to support one’s family, paying due taxes, and doing some charitable deeds for one’s spiritual welfare.

While actually engaged in an evil deed, such as stealing, the evil-doer is expending a great deal of time and effort to succeed in stealing the property while avoiding detection.

For example, smugglers may spend weeks digging a tunnel to smuggle contraband, only to find that their efforts have been wasted if the tunnel is discovered. Even if they evade capture, they may have to hide out for weeks or travel long distances to escape, suffering loss of their own property in the process, and being unable to do any legal employment during that period. If they are captured for a crime, charged and imprisoned, they suffer even greater loss due to not being able to work for some years.

2) “Secondly the evil-doer’s bad reputation gets noised abroad. This is the second danger for the immoral through the loss of morality.”

On release from prison, it is extremely hard for the prisoner to find work because of his or her criminal record. If someone is dismissed from a job due to dishonesty they may not be able to provide a good job reference.

3) “Thirdly, whatever society he enters — whether of priests, nobles, householders, or recluses, he enters shyly and confused. This is the third danger for the immoral through the loss of morality.”

No ordinary person is perfect in morality, but one who has defective morality will have made many enemies and will always be looking over his or her shoulder to see who is present who might reveal past misdeeds. A Stream-winner is entirely free from moral defects, and is open-hearted regarding whatever misdeeds he or she may have done in the past. Having nothing to hide and no wish to lie to conceal any faults, he or she is self-confident and fearless.

4) “Fourthly, he is full of anxiety when he dies. This is the fourth danger for the immoral through the loss of morality.”

A Stream-winner is assured of a happy destiny after death, so has no fear when the time for death approaches. An ordinary person who has done few misdeeds and many wholesome deeds will also be able to die peacefully.

5) “Fifthly, on the dissolution of the body, after death, the evil-doer is reborn in some unhappy state of suffering. This is the fifth danger for the immoral through the loss of morality. Householders, is the fivefold loss of the evil-doer!”

Later in this discourse, in the section on the *Mirror of the Dhamma*, the Buddha gives the criteria by means of which one can know if one a Stream-winner. There are other sources such as the *Alaggaḍūpama Sutta*, where two further types of individuals are assured of a fortunate rebirth: the Dhamma-follower and the Faith-follower. They are known as Lesser Stream-winners (*Cūḷasotāpanna*).

The Benefits of Morality (*Silavanta Ānisaṃsā*)

150. *“Pañcime, gahapatayo, ānisaṃsā sīlavato sīlasampadāya. Katame pañca? Idha, gahapatayo, sīlavā sīlasampanno appamādādhikaraṇaṃ mahantaṃ bhogakkhandhaṃ adhigacchati. Ayaṃ paṭhamo ānisaṃso sīlavato sīlasampadāya.*

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, sīlavato sīlasampannassa kalyāṇo kittisaddo abbhuggacchati. Ayaṃ dutiyo ānisaṃso sīlavato sīlasampadāya.

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, sīlavā sīlasampanno yaññadeva pariṣaṃ upasaṅkamati — yadi khattiyapariṣaṃ yadi brāhmaṇapariṣaṃ yadi gahapatipariṣaṃ yadi samaṇapariṣaṃ visārado upasaṅkamati amaṅkubhūto. Ayaṃ tatiyo ānisaṃso sīlavato sīlasampadāya.

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, sīlavā sīlasampanno asammūlho kālaṅkaroti. Ayaṃ catuttho ānisaṃso sīlavato sīlasampadāya.

“Puna caparaṃ, gahapatayo, sīlavā sīlasampanno kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjati. Ayaṃ pañcama ānisaṃso sīlavato sīlasampadāya. Ime kho, gahapatayo, pañca ānisaṃsā sīlavato sīlasampadāyā”ti.

150. “Fivefold, householders, is the benefit for a moral person through the practice of morality. Firstly, the moral person who is endowed with morality, acquires great wealth through heedfulness. This is the first benefit for the moral person endowed with morality.”

“Again, a moral person’s good reputation is spread abroad. This is the second benefit for the moral person endowed with morality.”

“Thirdly, whatever society a moral person enters — whether of priests, nobles, householders, or recluses — he or she enters confidently and self-possessed. This is the third benefit for the moral person endowed with morality.”

“Fourthly, a moral person dies without anxiety. This is the fourth benefit for the moral person endowed with morality.”

“Fifthly, on the dissolution of the body, after death, a moral person is reborn in some happy state in heaven. This is the fifth benefit for the moral person endowed with morality. These, householders, are the five benefits of the moral person who is endowed with morality.”

151. *Atha kho Bhagavā pāṭaligāṃike upāsake bahudeva rattiṃ dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā uyyojesi —*

“Abhikkantā kho, gahapatayo, ratti, yassadāni tumhe kālaṃ maññathā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho pāṭaligāmikā upāsakā Bhagavato paṭissutvā utthāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā pakkamiṃsu. Atha kho Bhagavā acirapakkantesu pāṭaligāmikesu upāsakesu suññāgāraṃ pāvisi.

151. When the Blessed One had thus taught the disciples of Pāṭaligāma, instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened them far into the night with religious discourse, he dismissed them, saying, “The night is far spent, householders. It is time for you to do what you think fit.” “Yes, Venerable sir,” answered the disciples of Pāṭaligāma, and they rose from their seats, and bowing to the Blessed One, keeping him on their right side as they passed him, they departed. Not long after the disciples of Pāṭaligāma had departed, the Blessed One remained in the empty hall.

Morality is the beginning of the holy life: lay people should always observe the five precepts, and should undertake the eight precepts on observance days. Novices should observe ten precepts and 75 training rules. Bhikkhus should observe the fourfold morality: 1) Fundamental restraint by the 227 Pātimokkha precepts for bhikkhus. 2) Sense-faculty restraint, which means not looking around here and there, not listening to gossip, eating mindfully, sitting, standing, walking, and lying down with composure, and keeping the mind free from sensuality, malevolence, and envy. 3) Right livelihood means avoiding astrology, bribery, flattering, deception, and asking for requisites without being invited. 4) Reflection on the use of requisites provided by the faithful. A monk should not use anything without reflecting on gratitude and suitability.

The Construction of Pāṭaliputta Pāṭaliputta Nagaramāpanaṃ

152. *Tena kho pana samayena sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā pāṭaligāme nagaraṃ māpenti vajjīnaṃ paṭibhāyā. Tena samayena sambahulā devatāyo sahasseva pāṭaligāme vatthūni pariḅhaṇhanti. Yasmiṃ padese mahesakkhā devatā vatthūni pariḅhaṇhanti, mahesakkhānaṃ tattha raññaṃ rājamahāmattānaṃ cittāni namanti nivesanāni māpetuṃ. Yasmiṃ padese majjhimā devatā vatthūni pariḅhaṇhanti, majjhimānaṃ tattha raññaṃ rājamahāmattānaṃ cittāni namanti nivesanāni māpetuṃ. Yasmiṃ padese nīcā devatā vatthūni pariḅhaṇhanti, nīcānaṃ tattha raññaṃ rājamahāmattānaṃ cittāni namanti nivesanāni māpetuṃ. Addasā kho Bhagavā dibbena cakkhunā visuddhena atikkantamānusakena tā devatāyo sahasseva pāṭaligāme vatthūni pariḅhaṇhantiyo. Atha kho Bhagavā rattiyā paccūsasamayaṃ paccuttthāyā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Ke nu kho, Ānanda, pāṭaligāme nagaraṃ māpenti”ti ? “Sunidhavassakārā, bhante, magadhamahāmattā pāṭaligāme nagaraṃ*

māpentī vajjīnaṃ paṭibāhāyā”ti. “*Seyyathāpi, Ānanda, devehi tāvatimsehi saddhiṃ mantetvā, evameva kho, Ānanda, sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā pāṭaligāme nagaraṃ māpentī vajjīnaṃ paṭibāhāyā. Idhāhaṃ, Ānanda, addasaṃ dibbena cakkhunā visuddhena atikkantamānusakena sambahulā devatāyo sahasseva pāṭaligāme vatthūni pariggaṇhantiyo. Yasmiṃ, Ānanda, padese mahesakkhā devatā vatthūni pariggaṇhanti, mahesakkhānaṃ tattha raññaṃ rājamahāmattānaṃ cittāni namanti nivesanāni māpetuṃ. Yasmiṃ padese majjhimā devatā vatthūni pariggaṇhanti, majjhimānaṃ tattha raññaṃ rājamahāmattānaṃ cittāni namanti nivesanāni māpetuṃ. Yasmiṃ padese nīcā devatā vatthūni pariggaṇhanti, nīcānaṃ tattha raññaṃ rājamahāmattānaṃ cittāni namanti nivesanāni māpetuṃ. Yāvata, Ānanda, ariyaṃ āyatanaṃ yāvata vaṇippatho idaṃ agganagaraṃ bhavissati pāṭaliputtaṃ puṭabhedanaṃ. Pāṭaliputtassa kho, Ānanda, tayo antarāyā bhavissanti — aggito vā udakato vā mithubhedā vā*”ti.

152. At that time Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Māgadha, were building a fortress at Pāṭaligāma to repel the Vajji, and there were many deities who inhabited the area. Now, wherever a place is occupied by powerful deities, they bend the minds of the most powerful kings and ministers to build dwelling-places there, and deities of middling and inferior power bend in a similar way the minds of middling or inferior kings and ministers. The Blessed One, with his divine eye, surpassing the vision of ordinary men, saw those deities occupying Pāṭaligāma. He rose early in the morning, saying to Ānanda: “Who is it then, Ānanda, who is building a fortress at Pāṭaligāma?”

“Sunidha and Vassakāra, Venerable sir, the chief ministers of Māgadha, are building a fortress there to keep back the Vajji.”

“They act, Ānanda, as if they had consulted with the gods of Tāvatiṃsa. [Telling him what he had seen, and of the influence the deities, he added]: “Among the famous residences of the Noble Ones, and as far as trade extends, this will become the chief city of Pāṭaliputta, a centre for trade. However, three dangers will affect Pāṭaliputta: fire, flood, and internal dissension.”

King Ajātasattu's minister, Vassakāra, created dissension among the Vajji after listening to the Buddha's prediction about the likely outcome of King Ajātasattu's proposed attack on them. So the Māgadhians would get the result of their unwholesome kamma later when they would also be defeated by internal dissension. Although each individual is responsible for their own actions, and not those of others, if a group of people act together, they may also experience the fruit of that action together. There are several stories to illustrate this in the Dhammapada commentary: [Nobody can Escape the Effects of Kamuna](#).

153. Atha kho sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamimsu; upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavatā saddhiṃ sammodimsu, sammodanīyaṃ kathaṃ sāraṇīyaṃ vītisāretvā ekamantaṃ atthaṃsu, ekamantaṃ thitā kho sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā Bhagavantaṃ etadavocuṃ — “Adhivāsetu no bhavaṃ Gotamo ajjatanāya bhantaṃ saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena”ti. Adhivāsesi Bhagavā tuṅhībhāvena. Atha kho sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā Bhagavato adhivāsaṇaṃ viditvā yena sako āvasatho tenupasaṅkamimsu; upasaṅkamitvā sake āvasathe paṇītaṃ khādanīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ paṭiyādāpetvā Bhagavato kālaṃ ārocāpesuṃ — “Kālo, bho Gotama, niṭṭhitaṃ bhanta”nti.

Atha kho Bhagavā pubbaṅhasamayaṃ nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena yena sunidhavassakārānaṃ magadhamahāmattānaṃ āvasatho tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā paññāte āsane nisīdi. Atha kho sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā buddhappamukhaṃ bhikkhusaṅghaṃ paṇītena khādanīyena bhojanīyena sahatthā santappesuṃ sampavāresuṃ. Atha kho sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā Bhagavantaṃ bhuttāviṃ onītapattapāṇiṃ aṇṇātaraṃ nīcaṃ āsaṇaṃ gahetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdīsu. Ekamantaṃ nisinne kho sunidhavassakāre magadhamahāmatte Bhagavā imāhi gāthāhi anumodi —

“Yasmiṃ padese kappeti, vāsaṃ paṇḍitajātiyo.
sīlavantettha bhojetvā, saññāte brahmacārayo.

“Yā tattha devatā āsuṃ, tāsāṃ dakkhiṇamādise.
tā pūjitā pūjayanti, mānitā mānayanti naṃ.

“Tato naṃ anukampanti, mātā puttāṃva orasaṃ.
Devatānukampito poso, sadā bhadrāni passatī”ti.

Atha kho Bhagavā sunidhavassakāre magadhamahāmatte imāhi gāthāhi anumoditvā utthāyāsanaṃ pakkāmi.

153. Now Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Māgadha, proceeded to where the Blessed One was staying, and when they had arrived they exchanged greetings and compliments of friendship and civility with the Blessed One, and stood respectfully on one side. So standing, Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Māgadha, said to the Blessed One, “May the good Gotama do us the honour of taking his meal, together with the Saṅgha, at our house today.” The Blessed One signified his consent by silence.

Then when Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Māgadha, perceived that he had given his consent, they returned to where they dwelt, and on arriving there, they prepared sweet dishes of boiled rice, and cakes.

Then they informed the Blessed One, saying, “The meal-time has come, friend Gotama,¹ and all is ready.”

The Blessed One robed himself early, took his bowl with him, and repaired with the brethren to the dwelling-place of Sunidha and Vassakāra, and sat down on the seat prepared for him. With their own hands they set the sweet rice and the cakes before the brethren with the Buddha at their head, and waited on them till they had had enough. When the Blessed One had finished his meal, the ministers brought a low seat, and sat down respectfully at his side. When they were seated the Blessed One gave thanks in these verses:—

“Wherever the wise man takes up his abode,
 Let him support there good and upright men of self-control.
 Let him give gifts to all such deities as may be there.
 Revered, they will revere him: honoured, they honour him again;
 Are gracious to him as a mother to her own, her only son.
 The man who has the grace of the gods, good fortune beholds.”

When he had thanked Sunidha and Vassakāra, the ministers of Māgadha, in these verses he rose from his seat and departed.

154. *Tena kho pana samayena sunidhavassakārā magadhamahāmattā Bhagavantam piṭṭhito piṭṭhito anubandhā honti — “Yenajja samaṇo Gotamo dvārena nikkhamissati, taṃ Gotamadvāraṃ nāma bhavissati. Yena titthena gaṅgaṃ nadiṃ tarissati, taṃ Gotamatitthaṃ nāma bhavissati”ti. Atha kho Bhagavā yena dvārena nikkhami, taṃ Gotamadvāraṃ nāma ahosi. Atha kho Bhagavā yena gaṅgā nadiṃ tenupasaṅkamaṃ. Tena kho pana samayena gaṅgā nadiṃ pūrā hoti samatittikā kākaṇṭhāyā. Appekacce manussā nāvaṃ pariyesanti, appekacce ulumpaṃ pariyesanti, appekacce kullaṃ bandhanti apārā, pārāṃ gantukāmā. Atha kho Bhagavā — seyyathāpi nāma balavā puriso samiñjitaṃ vā bāhaṃ pasāreyya, pasāritaṃ vā bāhaṃ samiñjeyya, evameva — gaṅgāya nadiyā orimatīre antarahito pārimatīre paccuṭṭhāsi saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena. Addasā kho Bhagavā te manusse appekacce nāvaṃ pariyesante appekacce ulumpaṃ pariyesante appekacce kullaṃ bandhante apārā pārāṃ gantukāme. Atha kho Bhagavā etamatthaṃ viditvā tāyaṃ velāyaṃ imaṃ udānaṃ udānesi —*

¹The ministers were polite, but not reverential, as they addressed the Buddha as “Bho Gotama,” not as “Bhante,” Venerable sir. Buddhaghosa tells this story: Vassakāra once saw Mahākaccāna descending from Vultures’ Peak and remarked that he was just like a monkey. The Buddha, hearing of this, said that, unless Vassakāra begged the Elder’s forgiveness, he would be reborn as a monkey in Veḷuvana. Vassakāra, feeling sure that the Buddha’s prophecy would come true, had various fruit and other trees planted in Veḷuvana, to be of use to him as a monkey. After death he was actually reborn as a monkey and answered to the name of Vassakāra.

*“Ye taranti añṇavaṃ saraṃ, setuṃ katvāna visajja pallalāni.
kullañhi jano bandhati, tiṇṇā medhāvino janā”ti.*

Paṭhama Bhāṇavāro.

154. They followed him as he went, saying, “The gate that the recluse Gotama goes out by today will be called Gotama’s gate, and the ferry at which he crosses the river will be called Gotama’s ferry.” So the gate that he went out by was called Gotama’s gate.

However, when the Blessed One went on to the river, the Ganges was brimful and overflowing. Wishing to cross to the opposite bank, some began to seek for boats, some for rafts of wood, while some made rafts of reeds. Then the Blessed One instantaneously vanished from this side of the river and stood on the far bank with the Saṅgha, as a strong man would stretch forth his arm or draw it back again when he had stretched it forth. The Blessed One saw the people looking for boats and rafts, and as he saw them he spoke this verse:—

*“They who wish to cross the flood,
Construct a bridge across the stream,
Whilst the vain world ties its rafts of reeds
These, the wise, these are saved indeed!”*

End of the First Portion for Recitation

The Account of the Four Noble Truths **(Ariyasaccakathā)**

155. *Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmañānanda, yena koṭigāmo tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena koṭigāmo tadavasari. Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā koṭigāme viharati. Tatra kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi —*

“Catunnaṃ, bhikkhave, ariyasaccānaṃ ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidam dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañceva tumhākañca. Katamesaṃ catunnaṃ? Dukkhasa, bhikkhave, ariyasaccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidam dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañceva tumhākañca. Dukkhasamudayassa, bhikkhave, ariyasaccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidam dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañceva tumhākañca. Dukkhanirodhassa, bhikkhave, ariyasaccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidam dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañceva tumhākañca. Dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya, bhikkhave, ariyasaccassa ananubodhā

appaṭivedhā evamidam dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañceva tumhākañca. Tayidaṃ, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ, dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ, ucchinnā bhavataṅhā, khīṇā bhavanetti, natthidāni punabbhavo”ti. Idamavoca Bhagavā. Idaṃ vatvāna sugato athāparam etadavoca satthā —

“Catunnaṃ ariyasaccānaṃ, yathābhūtaṃ adassanā.

Saṃsitaṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ, tāsu tāsveva jātisu.

Tāni etāni diṭṭhāni, bhavanetti samūhatā.

Ucchinnaṃ mūlaṃ dukkhassa, natthi dāni punabbhavo”ti.

Tatrapi sudaṃ Bhagavā koṭigāme viharanto etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti — “Ti sīlaṃ, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvitaṃ paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā”ti.

155. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to **Koṭigāma**.

“Yes, Venerable sir,” replied Venerable Ānanda, in assent.

The Blessed One proceeded with a great company of the brethren to Koṭigāma; and there he stayed in the village itself.

There the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying “It is through not understanding and penetrating the Four Noble Truths, monks, that we have had to wander so long in this cycle or existence, both you and I!”

“What are the four? The noble truth of suffering; the noble truth of the origin of suffering; the noble truth of the cessation of suffering; and the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering. When these noble truths are known and penetrated, the craving for existence is rooted out, that which leads to renewed existence is destroyed, and then there is no more birth!” Thus spoke the Blessed One (*Bhagavā*), and when the Fortunate One (*Sugato*) had spoken, again the teacher (*sattha*) said:—

“By not seeing the four Noble Truths as they really are,

Long is the path that is traversed through many a birth;

When these are grasped, the cause of birth is then removed,

The root of sorrow rooted out, and there is no more birth.”

At Koṭigāma too the Blessed One gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. “Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance.”

Those Destined for Enlightenment

(Anāvattidhammasambodhiparāyaṇā)

156. *Atha kho Bhagavā koṭigāme yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmañānanda, yena nātikā tenupaṇkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena nātikā tadavasari. Tatrapī sudantaṃ Bhagavā nātike viharati giñjakāvasathe. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā tenupasaṇkami; upasaṇkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Sālha nāma, bhante, bhikkhu nātike kālaṇkato, tassa kā gati, ko abhisamparāyo? Nandā nāma, bhante, bhikkhunī nātike kālaṇkatā, tassā kā gati, ko abhisamparāyo? Sudatto nāma, bhante, upāsako nātike kālaṇkato, tassa kā gati, ko abhisamparāyo? Sujātā nāma, bhante, upāsikā nātike kālaṇkatā, tassā kā gati, ko abhisamparāyo? Kukkuṭo nāma, bhante, upāsako nātike kālaṇkato, tassa kā gati, ko abhisamparāyo? Kālīmbo nāma, bhante, upāsako ... Nikato nāma, bhante, upāsako ... Katissaho nāma, bhante, upāsako ... Tuttho nāma, bhante, upāsako ... Santuttho nāma, bhante, upāsako ... Bhaddo nāma, bhante, upāsako ... Subhaddo nāma, bhante, upāsako nātike kālaṇkato, tassa kā gati, ko abhisamparāyo”ti?*

156. When the Blessed One had remained as long as was convenient at Koṭigāma, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to the villages of Nātikā.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” replied Venerable Ānanda, in assent.

The Blessed proceeded to the villages of Nātikā with a great company of monks, and at Nātikā, the Blessed One stayed at the Brick Hall.

The Venerable Ānanda went to the Blessed One, paid homage, and took his seat beside him. When he was seated, he addressed the Blessed One, saying, “The brother named Sālha has died at Nātikā, Venerable sir. Where has he been reborn, and what is his destiny? The sister named Nandā has died, Venerable sir, at Nātikā. Where is she reborn, and what is her destiny?”

In the same terms he enquired concerning the lay disciple Sudatta, and the female lay disciple Sujātā, the lay disciples Kukkuṭo, and Kālīmbo, and Nikāṭo, and Kaṭissaha, and Tuṭṭha, and Santuṭṭha, and Bhadda, and Subhadda.

157. “Sālho, Ānanda, bhikkhu āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭheva dhamme sayamaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihāsi. Nandā, Ānanda, bhikkhunī pañcannaṃ orambhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātikā tathā parinibbāyini anāvattidhammā tasmā lokā. Sudatto, Ānanda, upāsako tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā rāgadosamohānaṃ tanuttā sakadāgāmī sakideva imaṃ lokaṃ āgantvā dukkhassantaṃ karissati. Sujātā, Ānanda, upāsikā tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā sotāpannā avinipātadhammā niyatā sambodhiparāyaṇā. Kukkuṭo, Ānanda, upāsako pañcannaṃ orambhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātiko tathā parinibbāyī anāvattidhammo tasmā lokā. Kālīmbo, Ānanda, upāsako ... Nikāṭo, Ānanda, upāsako ... Kaṭissaho, Ānanda, upāsako ... Tuṭṭho, Ānanda, upāsako ... Santuṭṭho, Ānanda, upāsako ... Bhaddo, Ānanda, upāsako ... Subhaddo, Ānanda, upāsako pañcannaṃ orambhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātiko tathā parinibbāyī anāvattidhammo tasmā lokā. Paropaññāsaṃ, Ānanda, nātike upāsakā kālāṅkatā, pañcannaṃ orambhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātikā tathā parinibbāyino anāvattidhammā tasmā lokā. Sādhikā navuti, Ānanda, nātike upāsakā kālāṅkatā tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā rāgadosamohānaṃ tanuttā sakadāgāmīno sakideva imaṃ lokaṃ āgantvā dukkhassantaṃ karissanti. Sātirekāni, Ānanda, pañcasatāni nātike upāsakā kālāṅkatā, tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā sotāpannā avinipātadhammā niyatā sambodhiparāyaṇā.

157. “The brother named Sālha, Ānanda, by the destruction of the corruptions, has in this very life realised and attained Arahantship — to liberation by mind and liberation by wisdom. The sister named Nandā, Ānanda, has, by the complete destruction of the five lower fetters that bind people to this world, become an inheritor of the highest heavens, there to pass entirely away, never to return. The lay disciple Sudatta, Ānanda, by the complete destruction of the three fetters, and by the reduction of lust, hatred, and delusion has become a Once-returner, who on his first return to this world will make an end of suffering. The female lay disciple Sujātā, Ānanda, by the complete destruction of the three fetters, has become a Stream-winner, no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, and is assured of final liberation. The lay disciple Kukkuṭo, Ānanda, by the complete destruction of the five lower fetters that bind people to these lower worlds of lust, has become an inheritor of the highest heavens, there to pass entirely away, never

to return. So also is the case with Kālimba, Nikāṭa, Kaṭṭissaha, Tuṭṭha, Santuṭṭha, Bhadda, and Subhadda, and with more than fifty lay disciples of Nātikā. More than ninety lay disciples of Nātikā, who have died, Ānanda, have by the complete destruction of the three fetters, and by the reduction of lust, hatred, and delusion, become Once-returners, who on their first return to this world will make an end of suffering. More than five hundred lay disciples of Nātikā who have died, Ānanda, have, by the complete destruction of the three fetters become Stream-winners, are no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, and are assured of final liberation.

The Exposition on the Mirror of the Dhamma (*Dhammādāsadhammapariyāyā*)

158. *“Anacchariyaṃ kho panetaṃ, Ānanda, yaṃ manussabhūto kālaṅkareyya. Tasmīmyeva kālaṅkate Tathāgataṃ upasaṅkamiṭvā etamatthaṃ pucchissatha, vihesā hesā, Ānanda, Tathāgatassa. Tasmātiḥ Ānanda, dhammādāsaṃ nāma dhammapariyāyaṃ desessāmi, yena samannāgato ariyasāvako ākaṅkhamāno attanāva attānaṃ byākareyya — ‘Khīṇanirayomhi khīṇatiracchānayoṇi khīṇapettivoisayo khīṇāpāyaduggativinipāto, sotāpannohamasmi avinipātadhammo niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo’ti.*

158. “There is nothing strange in this, Ānanda, that a human being should die, but that as each one does so you should come to the Tathāgata, and enquire about them in this way, that is wearisome to the Tathāgata. Therefore Ānanda I will teach you a way to investigate the truth called “The Mirror of Truth,” by which a noble disciple may predict, “Hell is destroyed for me, and rebirth as an animal, or a ghost, or in any place of suffering. I am a Stream-winner, no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, assured of final liberation.”

159. *“Katamo ca so, Ānanda, dhammādāso dhammapariyāyo, yena samannāgato ariyasāvako ākaṅkhamāno attanāva attānaṃ byākareyya — ‘Khīṇanirayomhi khīṇatiracchānayoṇi khīṇapettivoisayo khīṇāpāyaduggativinipāto, sotāpannohamasmi avinipātadhammo niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo’ti?*

“Idh Ānanda, ariyasāvako buddhe aveccappasādena samannāgato hoti — ‘Itipi so Bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānaṃ buddho Bhagavā’ti.

“Dhamme aveccappasādena samannāgato hoti — ‘Svākkhāto Bhagavatā dhammo sandiṭṭhiko akāliko ehipassiko opaneyyiko paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhī’ti.

“Saṅghe aveccappasādena samannāgato hoti — ‘Suppaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho, ujuppaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho, ñāyappaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho, sāmīcippaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni atṭha purisapuggalā, esa Bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalikaraṇīyo anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassā’ti.

“Ariyakantehi sīlehi samannāgato hoti akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññūpasatthehi aparāmatṭhehi samādhisaṃvattanikehi.

“Ayaṃ kho so, Ānanda, dhammādāso dhammapariyāyo, yena samannāgato ariyasāvako ākaṅkhamāno attanāva attānaṃ byākareyya — ‘Khīṇanirayomhi khīṇatiracchānayoṇi khīṇapettivoṣayo khīṇāpāyaduggativinipāto, sotāpannohamasmi avinipātadhammo niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo”’ti.

Tatrapī sudamaṃ Bhagavā nātike viharanto giṅjakāvāsathe etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathamaṃ karoti —

“Iti sīlaṃ iti samādhī iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhī mahapphalo hoti mahānisamaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvitā paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisamsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā”’ti.

159. “What then, Ānanda, is this mirror of truth? It is the awareness that a noble disciple possesses firm confidence in the Buddha, believing the Blessed One to be an Arahant, Fully-enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, fortunate, knower of the worlds, the incomparable charioteer of trainable persons, teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. That he or she possesses firm confidence in the Dhamma, believing the truth to have been well proclaimed by the Blessed One, visible in this world, timeless, inviting investigation, leading onwards, and to be realised by the wise. The disciple is possessed of firm confidence in the Saṅgha, believing that the disciples of the Blessed One have practised correctly, honestly, and wisely, that they have attained the four Paths and Fruits, are worthy of honour, hospitality, gifts, and reverence; they are the most fertile field of merit for the world. The noble disciple also possesses virtues beloved by the good, with their morality unbroken, intact, spotless, and unblemished, virtues that make men truly free, that are praised by the wise, untarnished by the desire for future life or by the belief in the efficacy of outward acts, and are conducive to high and holy thought.”

“This, Ānanda, is the way of investigation, the mirror of truth, by which a noble disciple may predict, “Hell is destroyed for me; and rebirth as an

animal, or a ghost, or in any place of suffering. I am a Stream-winner; no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, and assured of final liberation.”

There, too, at the Brick Hall at Nātikā the Blessed One gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. “Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance.”

160. *Atha kho Bhagavā nātike yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “ĀyāṃĀnanda, yena Vesālī tenupasankamissāma”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena Vesālī tadavasari. Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā Vesāliyaṃ viharati ambapālīvane. Tatra kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi —*

“Sato, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vihareyya sampajāno, ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsani. Kathañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sato hoti? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Vedanāsu vedanānupassī ... Citte cittānupassī ... Dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sato hoti.

“Kathañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sampajāno hoti? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti, ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī hoti, samiñjite pasārite sampajānakārī hoti, saṅghāṭipattacīvaradhāraṇe sampajānakārī hoti, asite pīte khāyite sāyite sampajānakārī hoti, uccārapassāvakamme sampajānakārī hoti, gate ṭhite nisinne sutte jāgarite bhāsīte tuṅhībhāve sampajānakārī hoti. Evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sampajāno hoti. Sato, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vihareyya sampajāno, ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsani”ti.

160. When the Blessed One had remained as long as he wished at Nātikā, he addressed Ānanda, saying: “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Vesālī.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” replied Venerable Ānanda, in assent.

Then the Blessed One proceeded with a great company of monks to Vesālī, and there at Vesālī the Blessed One stayed at Ambapālī’s grove.

There the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying, “Monks, a monk should be mindful and clearly comprehending, this is my instruction to you.” How does a brother become mindful? Herein, monks, a monk dwells mindful of the body in the body; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having

overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. A monk dwells mindful of feeling in feelings; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. A monk dwells mindful of thoughts in thoughts; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. A monk dwells mindful of mental objects in mental objects; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world.

“How, monks, is a monk clearly comprehending? He acts, monks, in full presence of mind whatever he may do, in going out and coming back, in looking ahead and looking around, in bending or stretching his limbs, in wearing his robes or carrying his bowl, in eating and drinking, in chewing or tasting, in urinating or defecating, in walking, standing, or sitting, in sleeping or waking, in talking and in remaining silent. Thus monks, a monk is mindful and clearly comprehending. This is my instruction to you.”

The Buddha gave this advice because of the impending visit of Ambapālī, a beautiful courtesan. Though she was old, she was still extremely beautiful and graceful. If the monks were practising mindfulness diligently, they would not even look at her.

Ambapālī the Courtesan (Ambapālīgaṇikā)

161. Assosi kho ambapālīgaṇikā — “Bhagavā kira Vesāliṃ anuppatto Vesāliyaṃ viharati mayhaṃ ambavane”ti. Atha kho ambapālīgaṇikā bhaddāni bhaddāni yānāni yojāpetvā bhaddaṃ bhaddaṃ yānaṃ abhiruhitvā bhaddehi bhaddehi yānehi Vesāliyā niyyāsi. Yena sako ārāmo tena pāyāsi. Yāvaticā yānassa bhūmi, yānena gantvā, yānā paccorohitvā pattikāva yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho ambapālīgaṇikaṃ Bhagavā dhammiyā kathāya sandassesī samādapesi samuttejesī sampahaṃsesī. Atha kho ambapālīgaṇikā Bhagavatā dhammiyā kathāya sandassitā samādapitā samuttejitā sampahaṃsitā Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Adhivāsetu me, bhante, Bhagavā svātanāya bhattaṃ saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghenā”ti. Adhivāsesī Bhagavā tuṅhībhāvena. Atha kho ambapālīgaṇikā Bhagavato adhivāsanaṃ viditvā uttāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā pakkāmi.

Assosun kho Vesālikā Licchavī — “Bhagavā kira Vesāliṃ anuppatto Vesāliyaṃ viharati ambapālīvane”ti. Atha kho te Licchavī bhaddāni bhaddāni yānāni yojāpetvā bhaddaṃ bhaddaṃ yānaṃ abhiruhitvā bhaddehi bhaddehi yānehi Vesāliyā niyyimsu.

Tatra ekacce Licchavī nilā honti nilavaṇṇā nilavattā nilālaṅkāṛā, ekacce Licchavī pītā honti pītavaṇṇā pītavattā pītālaṅkāṛā, ekacce Licchavī lohitā honti lohitavaṇṇā lohitavattā lohitālaṅkāṛā, ekacce Licchavī odātā honti odātavaṇṇā odātavattā odātālaṅkāṛā. Atha kho ambapālī gaṇikā daharānaṃ daharānaṃ Licchavīnaṃ akkhena akkhaṃ cakkena cakkaṃ yugena yugaṃ paṭivaṭṭesi. Atha kho te Licchavī ambapālīṃ gaṇikaṃ etadavocum — “Kiṃ, je ambapāli, daharānaṃ daharānaṃ Licchavīnaṃ akkhena akkhaṃ cakkena cakkaṃ yugena yugaṃ paṭivaṭṭesi”ti? “Tathā hi pana me, ayyaputtā, Bhagavā nimantito svātanāya bhattaṃ saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena”ti. “Dehi, je ambapāli, etaṃ bhattaṃ satasahassenā”ti. “Sacepi me, ayyaputtā, Vesālīṃ sāhāraṃ dassatha, evamaḥaṃ taṃ bhattaṃ na dassāmi”ti. Atha kho te Licchavī aṅgulīṃ phoṭesum — “Jitamha vata bho ambakāya, jitamha vata bho ambakāyā”ti.

Atha kho te Licchavī yena ambapālīvanaṃ tena pāyimsu. Addasā kho Bhagavā te Licchavī dūratova āgacchante. Disvāna bhikkhū āmantesi — “Yesaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhūnaṃ devā tāvatimsā aditṭhapubbā, oloketha, bhikkhave, Licchavīparisaṃ; apaloketha, bhikkhave, Licchavīparisaṃ; upasaṃharatha, bhikkhave, Licchavīparisaṃ — tāvatimsasadisā”nti. Atha kho te Licchavī yāvaticā yānassa bhūmi, yānena gantvā, yānā paccorohitvā pattikāva yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamimsu; upasaṅkamtvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdimsu. Ekamantaṃ nisinne kho te Licchavī Bhagavā dhammiyā kathāya sandassesī samādapesī samuttejesī sampahaṃsesī. Atha kho te Licchavī Bhagavatā dhammiyā kathāya sandassitā samādapitā samuttejitā sampahaṃsitā Bhagavantaṃ etadavocum — “Adhivāsetu no, bhante, Bhagavā svātanāya bhattaṃ saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena”ti. Atha kho Bhagavā te Licchavī etadavoca — “Adhivutthaṃ kho me, Licchavī, svātanāya ambapālīyā gaṇikāya bhatta”nti. Atha kho te Licchavī aṅgulīṃ phoṭesum — “Jitamha vata bho ambakāya, jitamha vata bho ambakāyā”ti. Atha kho te Licchavī Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanditvā anumoditvā utthāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā pakkamimsu.

161. The courtesan Ambapālī heard that the Blessed One had arrived at Vesālī, and was staying at her mango grove. Ordering a number of magnificent vehicles to be made ready, she mounted one of them, and proceeded with her entourage towards her own park. She went in the carriage as far as the ground was passable for carriages, then alighted, and proceeded on foot to where the Blessed One was sitting, and took a seat respectfully on one side. When she was seated, the Blessed One instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened her with religious discourse.

Then she — being instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened with his words — addressed the Blessed One, saying, “May the Blessed One honour

me by taking his meal, together with the Saṅgha, at my house tomorrow." The Blessed One signified his consent by silence.

When Ambapālī the courtesan saw that the Blessed One had consented, she rose from her seat, paid homage, and keeping him on her right side as she left, she departed.

The Licchavī of Vesālī heard that the Blessed One had arrived at Vesālī, and was staying at Ambapālī's grove. Ordering a number of magnificent carriages to be made ready, they each mounted one of them and proceeded with their entourage to Vesālī. Some of them were dark, dark in colour, and wearing dark clothes and ornaments: some of them were fair, fair in colour, and wearing light clothes and ornaments: some of them were red, ruddy in colour, and wearing red clothes and ornaments: some of them were white, pale in colour, and wearing white clothes and ornaments.

Ambapālī drove up against the young Licchavī, axle to axle, wheel to wheel, and yoke to yoke, and the Licchavī said to Ambapālī the courtesan, "Ambapālī, why do drive up against us thus?"

She replied, "My lords, I have just invited the Blessed One and the Saṅgha for tomorrow's meal."

They said, "Ambapālī! Give up this meal to us for a hundred thousand."

"My lords, were you to offer all Vesālī with its subject territory, I would not give up so honourable a feast!"

Then the Licchavī snapped their fingers (*aṅgulīm phoṭesum*), exclaiming, "We have been beaten by this mango girl!"

Then the Licchavī went on to Ambapālī's grove. When the Blessed One saw the Licchavī approaching in the distance, he addressed the brethren, saying: "Monks, let those who have never seen the Tāvatiṃsa gods, gaze upon this company of the Licchavī, behold this company of the Licchavī, compare this company of the Licchavī even as a company of Tāvatiṃsa gods."

When they had ridden as far as the ground was passable for carriages, the Licchavī alighted there, and then went on on foot to where the Blessed One was sitting, and took their seats respectfully by his side. When they were thus seated the Blessed One instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened them with religious discourse.

Instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened with his words, they addressed the Blessed One, saying, "May the Blessed One do us the honour of taking his meal, together with the Saṅgha, at our house tomorrow?"

"I have consented, Licchavī, to take tomorrow's meal with Ambapālī the courtesan," was the reply.

Then the Licchavī snapped their fingers, exclaiming, “We have been beaten by this mango girl!” Expressing their thanks and approval of the words of the Blessed One, they rose from their seats and paid homage to the Blessed One, and keeping him on their right side as they left, they departed.

It is impossible that a Buddha could break a promise that he has given. Once a monk has accepted an invitation for alms, he should not accept another invitation from someone else. At one time, the Buddha Kassapa was invited for the Rains by Ghāṭikāra, a potter. He later refused an invitation from the King of Kāsi, saying that he had already been invited. See the Ghāṭikāra Sutta, Majjhimanikāya, Sutta 81.

To allow the monks more flexibility with meal arrangements it is better to invite in general terms, “I would like to offer alms to a certain number of monks,” or “I would like to invite the Saṅgha for alms.” In this way, the monk in charge of meal arrangements can satisfy everyone more easily. If one offers alms to the Saṅgha one makes more merit than offering to an Arahan̄t, even if the only representative of the Saṅgha available is a badly-behaved novice. This is surprising, but correct. If supporters like to invite only a particular monk they are guilty of partiality. By inviting the Saṅgha they make immeasurable merit, however many monks attend the almsgiving, since an invitation to the Saṅgha is an open invitation. If visiting monks happen to arrive, they are automatically invited too, and the resident monks have to share the available almsfood with them.

The almsfood is formally offered to the Saṅgha by reciting the words, *Imaṃ bhikkhaṃ, bhikkhusaṅghassa dema*, which means, “We offer this almsfood to the Saṅgha.” Then each dish of curry should be physically offered to the nearest monk, who should receive it by touching the dish with his hand or by holding a cloth, tray, or table-mat on which the dish should be placed by the donor. If the food is not formally offered in this way, it is not allowable for bhikkhus to eat it. The Vinaya rules prescribe that the donor must be within arms-reach of the bhikkhu. Food can also be dropped into a bhikkhu’s almsbowl (e.g. with a spoon).

In the Thai Forest tradition, once the food has been formally offered, it should not be touched again, but according to the Burmese tradition, as long as the monks have not relinquished the food, they can still use it.

There is another reason for offering the entire meal to the Saṅgha. If a lay person offers food to a monk and he refuses, since he has had enough rice, he should not later accept other food such as fruit or cakes. When many donors want to offer food some may not get a chance to have their dish accepted by any monk since they already have sufficient. Bhikkhus can take back excess food to share with others, but this is not always convenient

in modern times, and some may think they are being greedy. After the Saṅgha have finished their meal and relinquished the food, the remainder can be eaten by others.

162. *Atha kho ambapālī gaṇikā tassā rattiyā accayena sake ārāme paṇitaṃ khādanīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ paṭiyādāpetvā Bhagavato kālaṃ ārocāpesi — “Kālo, bhante, niṭṭhitaṃ bhatta”nti. Atha kho Bhagavā pubbaṅhasamayam nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena yena ambapālīyā gaṇikāya nivesanaṃ tenupasaṅkama; upasaṅkamtivā paññatte āsane nisīdi. Atha kho ambapālī gaṇikā buddhappamukhaṃ bhikkhusaṅghaṃ paṇitena khādanīyena bhojanīyena sahatthā santappesi sampavāresi. Atha kho ambapālī gaṇikā Bhagavantaṃ bhuttāvīṃ onītapattapāṇiṃ aṅṅātaraṃ nīcaṃ āsanaṃ gahetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinnā kho ambapālī gaṇikā Bhagavantaṃ etada voca — “Imāhaṃ, bhante, ārāmaṃ buddhappamukhassa bhikkhusaṅghassa dammi”ti. Paṭiggahehi Bhagavā ārāmaṃ. Atha kho Bhagavā ambapālīṃ gaṇikaṃ dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā utṭhāyāsanaṃ pakkāmi. Tatra pi sudam Bhagavā Vesāliyaṃ viharanta ambapālīvane etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti — “Iti sīlaṃ, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlapparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvitaṃ paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā”ti.*

162. At the end of the night Ambapālī the courtesan made delicious hard and soft food ready in her mansion, and announced the time to the Blessed One, saying, “The time has come Venerable sir, and the meal is ready!”

The Blessed One robed himself early in the morning, took his bowl, and went with the monks to Ambapālī’s dwelling: and when he had arrived he seated himself on the seat prepared for him. Ambapālī the courtesan set the delicious hard and soft food before the Saṅgha, with the Buddha at their head, and waited upon them until they refused any more.

When the Blessed One had finished his meal, the courtesan taking a low seat, sat down at one side, and addressed the Blessed One, saying, “Venerable sir, I donate this park to the Saṅgha of which the Buddha is the leader (*Imāhaṃ, bhante, ārāmaṃ buddhappamukhassa bhikkhusaṅghassa dammi*).” The Blessed One accepted the park, and after instructing, rousing, enthusing, and gladdening her with religious discourse, he rose from his seat and departed.

Ambapālī later became a bhikkhūnī and attained Arahantship. Though a courtesan due to force of circumstances, she was certainly not a common prostitute. In a previous life she had been a virtuous bhikkhūnī, but on seeing some phlegm spat out on the pagoda precincts by an Arahant bhikkhūnī, she contemptuously exclaimed, “What

kind of whore would spit in a place like this?" When she was reborn in the time of the Buddha, she was abandoned by her mother, perhaps also a prostitute, in the mango grove of King Bimbisāra. The good king brought up the orphaned baby girl in the royal household. When she came of age, all the young nobles vied with one another for her hand in marriage. The elders feared that blood would be shed, so they decided that Ambapālī should be established as a courtesan. Then anyone who could afford the price could sleep with her. Thus, due to her excellent morality she was extremely beautiful, but due to her contemptuous remark about an Arahant she suffered the humiliation of being a courtesan. So self-righteousness indignation can be very dangerous. It is better to cultivate tolerance and compassion for the faults of others. Unless one has attained the path of Stream-winning, morality is unstable and imperfect.

While staying at Vesāli the Blessed One gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. "Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance."

Observing the Rains Retreat at Beḷuva (*Veḷuvagāṃavassūpagamanam*)

163. Atha kho Bhagavā ambapālivane yathābhiraṇṇaṃ viharitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — "Āyāmaṃ Ānanda, yena veḷuvagāṃako tenupasaṅkamissāmā"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena veḷuvagāṃako tadavasari. Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā veḷuvagāmake viharati. Tatra kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — "Etha tumhe, bhikkhave, samantā Vesāliṃ yathāmittaṃ yathāsandiṭṭhaṃ yathā-sambhattaṃ vassaṃ upetha. Ahaṃ pana idheva veḷuvagāmake vassaṃ upagacchāmi"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho te bhikkhū Bhagavato patissutvā samantā Vesāliṃ yathāmittaṃ yathāsandiṭṭhaṃ yathāsambhattaṃ vassaṃ upagacchimsu. Bhagavā pana tattheva veḷuvagāmake vassaṃ upagacchi.

163. When the Blessed One had remained as long as he wished at Ambapālī's grove, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: "Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Beḷuva (Veḷuva)."

The variant reading of *Beḷuva* found in the Sri Lankan edition of the Pāli texts is more likely correct than the CSCD text version of *Veḷuvana*. The Bamboo (*veḷu*) grove

at Rājagaha donated by King Bimbisāra is very famous, and there are several other places with the same name, but Beḷuva was near Vesālī, on the opposite side of the Ganges to Rājagaha. The translation by Maurice Walshe also refers to Beḷuva here.

“Yes, Venerable sir,” replied Venerable Ānanda, in assent.

Then the Blessed One proceeded with a great company of monks to Beḷuva, and there the Blessed One stayed in the village itself.

The Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: “Monks, take up residence for the rainy season near Vesālī, each according to the place where his friends, intimates, and companions may live. I will enter upon the rainy season here at Beḷuva.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the monks replied in assent, and they entered upon the rainy season around about Vesālī, each where his friends or intimates or close companions lived, whilst the Blessed One stayed just there at Beḷuva.

164. Atha kho Bhagavato vassūpagatassa kharo ābādho uppajji, bālḥā vedanā vattanti māraṇantikā. Tā sudam Bhagavā sato sampajāno adhvāsesi avihaññamāno. Atha kho Bhagavato etadahosi — “Na kho metaṃ patirūpaṃ, yvāhaṃ anāmantetoā upatthāke anapaloketoā bhikkhusaṅghaṃ parinibbāyeyyaṃ. Yaṃnūnāhaṃ imaṃ ābādhaṃ vīriyena paṭipañāmetoā jīvitasañkhāraṃ adhiṭṭhāya vihareyya”nti. Atha kho Bhagavā taṃ ābādhaṃ vīriyena paṭipañāmetoā jīvitasañkhāraṃ adhiṭṭhāya vihāsi. Atha kho Bhagavato so ābādho paṭipassambhi. Atha kho Bhagavā gilānā vutthito aciravutthito gelaññā vihārā nikkhamma vihārapacchāyāyaṃ paññatte āsane nisīdi. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitoā Bhagavantam abhivādetoā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etadvoca — “Diṭṭho me, bhante, Bhagavato phāsu; diṭṭhaṃ me, bhante, Bhagavato khamaṇīyaṃ, api ca me, bhante, madhurakajāto viya kāyo. Disāpi me na pakkhāyanti; dhammāpi maṃ na paṭibhanti Bhagavato gelaññena, api ca me, bhante, ahoṣi kācīdeva assāsamattā — “Na tāva Bhagavā parinibbāyissati, na yāva Bhagavā bhikkhusaṅghaṃ ārabha kiñcīdeva udāharatī”ti.

164. When the Blessed One had thus entered upon the rainy season, a dire sickness fell upon him, and sharp pains oppressed him, even to the point of death. However, the Blessed One, mindful and clearly comprehending, bore them without complaint. Then this thought occurred to the Blessed One, “It would not be right for me to pass away without addressing the disciples, without taking leave of the Saṅgha. Let me now, by a strong effort of will, suppress this sickness, and keep hold on life until the allotted time has come.”

Then the Blessed One, by a strong effort of will, suppressed that sickness, and kept hold on life until the time should come, and the sickness abated.

Soon after the Blessed One had recovered, when he had quite got rid of the sickness, he went out from the dwelling place, and sat down behind it on a seat spread out there. The venerable Ānanda went to where the Blessed One was seated, paid homage, took a seat respectfully on one side, and addressed the Blessed One, saying, "I saw how the Blessed One was in health, and how he had to suffer. Though at the sight of the Blessed One's sickness my body became as weak as a creeper, the horizon became dim to me, and my faculties were no longer clear, yet notwithstanding I took some comfort from the thought that the Blessed One would not pass away before he had left instructions regarding the Saṅgha."

165. "Kiṃ pan'Ānanda, bhikkhusaṅgho mayi paccāsīṣati ? desito, Ānanda, mayā dhammo anantaraṃ abāhiraṃ karitvā. NatthĀnanda, Tathāgatassa dhammesu ācariyamutṭhi. Yassa nūna, Ānanda, evamassa — 'Ahaṃ bhikkhusaṅghaṃ pariharissāmi'ti vā 'Mamuddesiko bhikkhusaṅgho'ti vā, so nūna, Ānanda, bhikkhusaṅghaṃ ārabba kiñcīdeva udāhareyya. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, na evaṃ hoti — 'Ahaṃ bhikkhusaṅghaṃ pariharissāmi'ti vā 'Mamuddesiko bhikkhusaṅgho'ti vā. Sakīṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgato bhikkhusaṅghaṃ ārabba kiñcīdeva udāharissati. Ahaṃ kho pan'Ānanda, etarahi jiṇṇo vuddho mahallako addhagato vayoanuppatto. Āsītiko me vayo vattati. Seyyathāpi, Ānanda, jajjarasakaṭaṃ veṭhamissakena yāpeti, evameva kho, Ānanda, veṭhamissakena maññe Tathāgatassa kāyo yāpeti. Yasmiṃ, Ānanda, samaye Tathāgato sabbanimittānaṃ amanasikārā ekaccānaṃ vedanānaṃ nirodhā animittaṃ cetosamādhim upasampajja viharati, phāsutaro, Ānanda, tasmīṃ samaye Tathāgatassa kāyo hoti. TasmātiĀnanda, attadīpā viharatha attasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, dhammadīpā dhammasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā. KathaṅcĀnanda, bhikkhu attadīpo viharati attasaraṇo anaññasaraṇo, dhammadīpo dhammasaraṇo anaññasaraṇo? IdhĀnanda, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati atāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Vedanāsu ... Citte ... Dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati atāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Evaṃ kho, Ānanda, bhikkhu attadīpo viharati attasaraṇo anaññasaraṇo, dhammadīpo dhammasaraṇo anaññasaraṇo. Ye hi keci, Ānanda, etarahi vā mama vā accayena attadīpā viharissanti attasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, dhammadīpā dhammasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, tamatagge me te, Ānanda, bhikkhū bhavissanti ye keci sikkhākāmā"ti.

165. “What, then, Ānanda, does the Saṅgha expect of me? I have taught the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine. In respect of the truth, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps some things back. Surely, Ānanda, should there be anyone who harbours the thought, “It is I who will lead the Saṅgha,” or, “The Saṅgha is dependent upon me,” it is he who should lay down instructions in any matter concerning the Saṅgha. The Tathāgata, Ānanda, does not think that he should lead the Saṅgha, or that the Saṅgha is dependent upon him. Why then should he leave instructions in any matter concerning the Saṅgha? I, Ānanda, have grown old, advanced in years, and my journey is drawing to its close, I have reached my sum of days, I am over eighty years of age. Just like a worn-out cart, Ānanda, can only with much additional care be made to move along, so, the body of the Tathāgata can only be kept going with much additional care. It is only, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata, ceasing to attend to any outward sign, or to experience any sensation, becomes plunged in that deep meditation that is not concerned with any material object, that the body of the Tathāgata is at ease. Therefore, Ānanda, be lamps to yourselves (*attadīpo*). Be a refuge to yourselves (*attasaraṇo*). Take no external refuge. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp (*dhammadīpo*). Hold fast to the truth as a refuge (*dhammasaraṇo*). Look for refuge in no one besides yourselves. How, Ānanda, is a monk a lamp to himself, a refuge to himself, taking no external refuge, holding fast to the truth as a lamp, holding fast to the truth as a refuge, looking for refuge in no one besides himself? Herein, Ānanda, a monk should be mindful and clearly comprehending, this is my instruction to you.” How does a monk become mindful? Herein, monks, a monk dwells mindful of the body in the body; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. A monk dwells mindful of feeling in feelings; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. A monk dwells mindful of thoughts in thoughts; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. A monk dwells mindful of mental objects in mental objects; ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. Whosoever, Ānanda, either now or after I am dead, shall be a lamp to themselves, and a refuge to themselves, shall betake themselves to no external refuge, but holding fast to the truth as their lamp, and holding fast as their refuge to the truth, shall look not for refuge to anyone besides themselves — it is they,

Ānanda, among my disciples, who will reach the highest goal, whoever is eager to train themselves.”

There is an apparent paradox in this teaching. On the one hand, good friendship is described as the whole of the holy life, and on going-forth one should take dependence on a teacher, faithfully following their guidance until one has sufficient knowledge and experience to become independent. Anyone who is not yet a Stream-winner is still liable to fall into wrong-views and miss the right path if he or she does not heed the advice of teachers and wise friends who are more experienced in the practice. On the other hand, no one can become independent without personal realisation of the truth. What is meant by being a refuge to oneself is that even a Buddha or an Arahan̄ta can only show the way. However skilled the teacher may be, each individual must walk the full distance on the path by himself or herself. No one can carry another to nibbāna on their shoulders. Finding the right method to control the mind is like learning to swim, ride a bicycle, or fly an aeroplane. A teacher can instruct and encourage the pupil, but the pupil has to master the skill through practice.

End of the Second Portion for Recitation

The Account of Giving a Hint (*Nimittobhāsakathā*)

166. Atha kho Bhagavā pubbaṅhasamayam nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya Vesālīṃ piṇḍāya pāvīsi. Vesāliyaṃ piṇḍāya caritvā pacchābhantaṃ piṇḍapāta-paṭikkanto āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Gañhāhi, Ānanda, nisīdanaṃ, yena cāpālaṃ cetiyaṃ tenupasaṅkamissāma divā vihārāyā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā nisīdanaṃ ādāya Bhagavantaṃ piṭṭhito piṭṭhito anubandhi. Atha kho Bhagavā yena cāpālaṃ cetiyaṃ tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā paññatte āsane nisīdi. Āyasmāpi kho Ānando Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi.

166. Now the Blessed One robed himself early in the morning, and taking his bowl and the robe, went into Vesālī for alms, and when he returned he sat down on the seat prepared for him, and after he had finished eating the almsfood he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: “Take up the mat, Ānanda; I will go to spend the day at the Cāpāla Cetiya.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent, and taking up the mat he followed behind the Blessed One. So the Blessed One proceeded to the Cāpāla Cetiya, and when he had come there he sat down on the mat spread out for him, and the Venerable Ānanda took his seat respectfully beside him.

167. *Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ Bhagavā etadavoca — “Ramaṇīyā, Ānanda, Vesālī, ramaṇīyaṃ udenaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ Gotamakaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ sattambaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ bahuputtaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ sārandaḍaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ cāpālaṃ cetiyaṃ. Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvitā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā, so ākaṅkhamāno kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesam vā. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvitā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā, so ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesam vā”ti. Evampi kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavatā olārike nimitte kayiramāne olārike obhāse kayiramāne nāsakkhi paṭivijjhituṃ; na Bhagavantaṃ yāci — “Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kappam, tiṭṭhatu sugato kappam bahujaṇahitāya bahujaṇasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna”nti, yathā taṃ mārena pariyaṭṭhitacitto. Dutiyampi kho Bhagavā ... Tatiyampi kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Ramaṇīyā, Ānanda, Vesālī, ramaṇīyaṃ udenaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ Gotamakaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ sattambaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ bahuputtaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ sārandaḍaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇīyaṃ cāpālaṃ cetiyaṃ. Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvitā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā, so ākaṅkhamāno kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesam vā. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvitā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā, so ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesam vā”ti. Evampi kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavatā olārike nimitte kayiramāne olārike obhāse kayiramāne nāsakkhi paṭivijjhituṃ ; na Bhagavantaṃ yāci — “Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kappam, tiṭṭhatu sugato kappam bahujaṇahitāya bahujaṇasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna”nti, yathā taṃ mārena pariyaṭṭhitacitto. Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Gaccha tvaṃ, Ānanda, yassadāni kālaṃ maññasi”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā uṭṭhāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā avidūre aññatarasmiṃ rukkhamūle nisīdi.*

167. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda: “How delightful a spot, Ānanda, is Vesālī, and the Udena Cetiya, and the Gotamaka Cetiya, and the Sattamba Cetiya, and the Bahuputta Cetiya, and the Sārandaḍa Cetiya, and the Cāpāla Cetiya.

“Ānanda, whosoever has developed, made much off, made them his vehicle and support, and ascended to the summit of the four bases of success (*iddhipāda*), and has mastered them, if he wished could remain in the same birth for a lifespan,¹ or for that portion of the lifespan that had yet to run.

¹ The word used, “*kappa*,” can mean a world-cycle, but here it probably means the maximum

The Tathāgata has [done this], and he could, should he so wish, live on for a full lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that has yet to run.”

However, even though a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear was given by the Blessed One, the Venerable Ānanda was incapable of comprehending, and did not request the Blessed One, saying, “Determine, Venerable sir, to remain for the full lifespan! Live on to the end of the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the good and the gain and the weal of gods and men,” so far was his heart possessed by the Evil One.

A second and a third time did the Blessed One say the same thing, and a second and a third time was Ānanda’s heart thus hardened. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda saying: “Leave me for a while Ānanda and do whatever you see fit.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent, and rising from his seat he saluted the Blessed One, and passing him on the right, sat down at the foot of a certain tree not far off.

The Account of Māra’s Request (Mārayācanakathā)

168. *Atha kho māro pāpimā acirapakkante āyasmante Ānande yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā ekamantaṃ atthāsi. Ekamantaṃ t̥hito kho māro pāpimā Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālo dāni, bhante, Bhagavato. Bhāsitā kho panesā, bhante, Bhagavatā vācā — ‘Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me bhikkhū na sāvakā bhavissanti viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammapaṭṭipannā sāmīcippaṭṭipannā anudhammacārino, sakaṃ ācariyakam uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññāpessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajjissanti uttāni karissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti’ ti. Etarahi kho pana,*

lifespan of that era, which in the Buddha’s lifetime seems to have been 160 years, as was the case for Venerable Bakula, the healthiest of all of the monks. The fact that the Venerable Ānanda was unable to take the hint, even though it was repeated on many occasions, is remarkable. Later, at the first Buddhist Council, he would be asked to confess an offence of wrong-doing due to this. In other cases, Venerable Ānanda was able to take a hint. The Buddha was also quite capable of influencing the thoughts of others, as he did with King Pasenadi for seven days after the demise of Queen Mallikā, not wishing the king to ask about her destiny until such time as she had died and been reborn again in a more fortunate existence. Here, however, the Buddha had no desire at all for more existence, so made no attempt to influence the Venerable Ānanda in any way. It seems that Ānanda was influenced by Māra.

bhante, bhikkhū Bhagavato sāvakaṃ viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacārino, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhanti desenti paññapenti paṭṭhapenti vivaranti vibhajanti uttānīkaronti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desenti. Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato.

“Bhāsītā kho panesā, bhante, Bhagavatā vācā — ‘Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me bhikkhuniyo na sāvikaṃ bhavissanti viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacāriniyo, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānīkarissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti’ti. Etarahi kho pana, bhante, bhikkhuniyo Bhagavato sāvikaṃ viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacāriniyo, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhanti desenti paññapenti paṭṭhapenti vivaranti vibhajanti uttānīkaronti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desenti. Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato.

“Bhāsītā kho panesā, bhante, Bhagavatā vācā — ‘Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me upāsakā na sāvakaṃ bhavissanti viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacārino, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānīkarissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti’ti. Etarahi kho pana, bhante, upāsakā Bhagavato sāvakaṃ viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacārino, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhanti desenti paññapenti paṭṭhapenti vivaranti vibhajanti uttānīkaronti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desenti. Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato.

“Bhāsītā kho panesā, bhante, Bhagavatā vācā — ‘Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me upāsikā na sāvikaṃ bhavissanti viyattā vinitā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacāriniyo, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānīkarissanti, uppannaṃ

parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappātihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti'ti. Etarahi kho pana, bhante, upāsikā Bhagavato sāvīkā viyattā vinitā visārādā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacāriniyo, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhanti desenti paññapenti paṭṭhapenti vivaranti vibhajanti uttānikaronti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappātihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desenti. Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato.

“Bhāsītā kho panesā, bhante, Bhagavatā vācā — ‘Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me idaṃ brahmacariyaṃ na iddhaṃ ceva bhavissati phītañca vitthārikaṃ bāhujaññaṃ puthubhūtaṃ yāva devamanussehi suppakāsita’nti. Etarahi kho pana, bhante, Bhagavato brahmacariyaṃ iddhaṃ ceva phītañca vitthārikaṃ bāhujaññaṃ puthubhūtaṃ, yāva devamanussehi suppakāsitaṃ. Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato”ti.

Evam vutte Bhagavā māraṃ pāpimanntaṃ etadavoca — ‘Apposukko tvaṃ, pāpima, hohi, na ciraṃ Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Ito tiṇṇaṃ māsānaṃ accayena Tathāgato parinibbāyissati’ti.

168. Not long after the Venerable Ānanda had gone, Māra, the Evil One, approached the Blessed One, and stood beside him. Standing there, he addressed the Blessed One in these words: “Pass away now, Venerable sir, from existence; let the Blessed One now die. Now is the time for the Blessed One to pass away — even according to the words that the Blessed One spoke when he said: ‘I shall not die, Evil One, until the monks and nuns of the Saṅgha, and until the male and female lay-disciples have become true disciples, wise and well-trained, ready and learned, versed in the scriptures, fulfilling all the greater and lesser duties, correct in life, living according to the precepts — until they, having thus themselves learned the doctrine, shall be able to tell others of it, teach it, make it known, establish it, open it, minutely explain it and make it clear — until they, when others start vain doctrine, shall be able by the truth to vanquish and refute it, and so to spread the wonder-working truth abroad!’ Now, Venerable sir, the monks and nuns of the Saṅgha and the male and female lay-disciples have become all this, are able to do all this. Pass away now therefore, Venerable sir, from existence; let the Blessed One now die! The time has come for the Blessed One to pass away — even according to the words that he said, ‘I will not die, Evil One, until this pure religion of mine has become successful, prosperous, wide-

spread, and popular to its full extent — until it will have been well proclaimed to men.’ Now, Venerable sir, this pure religion of yours has become all this. Pass away now therefore, Venerable sir, from existence; let the Blessed One now die! The time has come for the Blessed One to pass away!’

When he had thus spoken, the Blessed One addressed Māra, the Evil One, saying: “Evil One! Be happy, the final extinction of the Tathāgata will take place before long. Three months from this time the Tathāgata will pass away!”

Renouncing the Remaining Lifespan (Āyusañkhāraossajjanam)

169. *Atha kho Bhagavā cāpāle cetiye sato sampajāno āyusañkhāraṃ ossaji. Ossatṭhe ca Bhagavatā āyusañkhāre mahābhūmicālo ahoṣi bhīṃsanako salomahaṃso, devadundubhiyo ca phaliṃsu. Atha kho Bhagavā etamatthaṃ viditvā tāyaṃ velāyaṃ imaṃ udānaṃ udānesi —*

*“Tulamātulañca sambhavaṃ, bhavañkhāramavassaji muni.
ajjhatarato samāhito, abhindi kavacamivattasambhava”nti.*

169. Thus the Blessed One while at the Cāpāla Cetiya deliberately and consciously rejected the rest of his allotted sum of life, and a mighty earthquake arose, awful and terrible, and thunder burst forth. When the Blessed One saw this, he broke out at that time into this hymn of exultation:

“His sum of life the sage renounced,
The cause of life immeasurable or small;
With inward joy and calm, he broke,
Like a coat of mail, his life’s own cause!”

The Causes of Great Earthquakes (Mahābhūmicālahetu)

170. *Atha kho āyasmato Ānandassa etadahosi — “Acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho, mahā vatāyaṃ bhūmicālo; sumahā vatāyaṃ bhūmicālo bhīṃsanako salomahaṃso; devadundubhiyo ca phaliṃsu. Ko nu kho hetu ko paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāyā”ti?*

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami, upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi, ekamantaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Acchariyaṃ, bhante, abbhutaṃ, bhante, mahā vatāyaṃ, bhante, bhūmicālo; sumahā vatāyaṃ, bhante, bhūmicālo bhīṃsanako

salomahaṃso; devadundubhiyo ca phalimsu. Ko nu kho, bhante, hetu ko paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāyā"ti?

170. Now the following thought occurred to the Venerable Ānanda: "Wonderful indeed and marvellous is it that this mighty earthquake should arise, awful and terrible, and that the thunders of heaven should burst forth! What may be the proximate, what the remote cause of the appearance of this earthquake?"

Then the Venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, paid homage to the Blessed One, seated himself respectfully at one side, saying: "Wonderful indeed and marvellous is it that this mighty earthquake should arise, awful and terrible, and that the thunders of heaven should burst forth! What may be the proximate, what the remote cause of the appearance of this earthquake?"

171. "Aṭṭha kho ime, Ānanda, hetū, aṭṭha paccayā mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya. Katame aṭṭha? Ayaṃ, Ānanda, mahāpathavī uduke patitṭhitā, udakaṃ vāte patitṭhitam, vāto ākāsaṭṭho. Hoti kho so, Ānanda, samayo, yaṃ mahāvātā vāyanti. Mahāvātā vāyantā udakaṃ kampenti. Udukaṃ kampitam pathaviṃ kampeti. Ayaṃ paṭhamo hetu paṭhamo paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

"Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, samaṇo vā hoti brāhmaṇo vā iddhiṃ cetovasippatto, devo vā mahiddhiko mahānubhāvo, tassa parittā pathavīsaññā bhāvītā hoti, appamāṇā āposaññā. So imaṃ pathaviṃ kampeti saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedheti. Ayaṃ dutiyo hetu dutiyo paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

"Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, yadā bodhisatto tusitakāyā cavitvā sato sampajāno mātukucchiṃ okkamati, tadāyaṃ pathavī kampati saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedhati. Ayaṃ tatiyo hetu tatiyo paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

"Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, yadā bodhisatto sato sampajāno mātukucchismā nikkhamati, tadāyaṃ pathavī kampati saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedhati. Ayaṃ catuttho hetu catuttho paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

"Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, yadā Tathāgato anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambujjhati, tadāyaṃ pathavī kampati saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedhati. Ayaṃ pañcama hetu pañcama paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

"Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, yadā Tathāgato anuttaraṃ dhammacakkaṃ pavatteti, tadāyaṃ pathavī kampati saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedhati. Ayaṃ chaṭṭho hetu chaṭṭho paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

“Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, yadā Tathāgato sato sampajāno āyusaṅkhāraṃ ossajjati, tadāyaṃ pathavī kampaṭi saṅkampaṭi sampakampaṭi sampavedhati. Ayaṃ sattamo hetu sattamo paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya.

“Puna caparaṃ, Ānanda, yadā Tathāgato anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbāyati, tadāyaṃ pathavī kampaṭi saṅkampaṭi sampakampaṭi sampavedhati. Ayaṃ aṭṭhamo hetu aṭṭhamo paccayo mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāya. Ime kho, Ānanda, aṭṭha hetū, aṭṭha paccayā mahato bhūmicālassa pātubhāvāyā”ti.

171. “There are eight root causes, eight conditions, Ānanda, for the appearance of a mighty earthquake. What eight? This great earth, Ānanda, is established on water, the water on wind, and the wind rests upon space. At such a time, Ānanda, as the mighty winds blow, the waters are shaken by the mighty winds as they blow, and by the moving water the earth is shaken. These are the first causes, proximate and remote, of the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

The four elements of earth, water, fire, and air should not be regarded literally. Here, water means fluidity, and even molten rock has the element of fluidity. The element of wind means pressure or motion, and earth refers to solidity. When the pressure of gases increases inside the earth’s mantle, the magma flows being pushed by the high pressures. Wherever there are faults in the solid rock, the pressure forces the rock surfaces apart and earthquakes can occur. The increase of water pressure in saturated ground can also cause liquefaction, and previously solid earth becomes like quicksand. This regular type of earthquake is due to the law of climate (utu niyāma).

“Again, Ānanda, a recluse or priest of great mental power, who has mastered the mind, or a deity of great might and power, such a one by intense meditation on the finite idea of earth or the infinite idea of water can make this earth move and tremble and shake violently. This is the second cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

“Again, Ānanda, when a Bodhisatta mindfully and clearly comprehending leaves his temporary abode, the heaven of delight, and descends into his mother’s womb, then this earth quakes and trembles and shakes violently. This is the third cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

“Again, Ānanda, when a Bodhisatta mindfully and clearly comprehending leaves his mother’s womb, then the earth quakes and trembles and shakes violently. This is the fourth cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

“Again, Ānanda, when a Tathāgata attains supreme and perfect enlightenment, then this earth quakes and trembles and shakes violently. This is the fifth cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

“Again, Ānanda, when a Tathāgata sets in motion the wheel of the Dhamma, then this earth quakes and trembles and is shaken violently. This is the sixth cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

“Again, Ānanda, when a Tathāgata mindfully and clearly comprehending rejects the remainder of his lifespan, then this earth quakes and trembles and shakes violently. This is the seventh cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

“Again, Ānanda, when a Tathāgata passes entirely away with that utter passing away in which nothing whatever is left behind, then this earth quakes and trembles and shakes violently. This is the eighth cause and condition for the appearance of a mighty earthquake.

The Eight Kinds of Assembly (*Atṭha Parisā*)

172. *“Atṭha kho imā, Ānanda, parisā. Katamā atṭha? Khattiyaparisā, brāhmaṇaparisā, gahapatiparisā, samaṇaparisā, cātumahārājikaparisā, tāvatimsaparisā, māraparisā, brahmaparisā. Abhijānāmi kho panāhaṃ, Ānanda, anekasataṃ khattiyaparisamaṃ upasaṅkamtā. Tatrapi mayā sannisinnapubbaṃ ceva sallapitapubbaṃ sākaṅkā ca samāpajjitapubbā. Tattha yādisako tesamaṃ vaṇṇo hoti, tādisako mayhaṃ vaṇṇo hoti. Yādisako tesamaṃ saro hoti, tādisako mayhaṃ saro hoti. Dhammiyā kathāya sandassemi samādapemi samuttejemi sampahaṃsemi. Bhāsamaṇāṅka maṃ na jānanti — ‘Ko nu kho ayaṃ bhāsati devo vā manusso vā’ti? Dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā antaradhāyāmi. Antarahitaṅka maṃ na jānanti — ‘Ko nu kho ayaṃ antarahito devo vā manusso vā’ti? Abhijānāmi kho panāhaṃ, Ānanda, anekasataṃ brāhmaṇaparisamaṃ ... Gahapatiparisamaṃ ... Samaṇaparisamaṃ ... Cātumahārājikaparisamaṃ ... Tāvatimsaparisamaṃ ... Māraparisamaṃ ... Brahmaparisamaṃ upasaṅkamtā. Tatrapi mayā sannisinnapubbaṃ ceva sallapitapubbaṃ sākaṅkā ca samāpajjitapubbā. Tattha yādisako tesamaṃ vaṇṇo hoti, tādisako mayhaṃ vaṇṇo hoti. Yādisako tesamaṃ saro hoti, tādisako mayhaṃ saro hoti. Dhammiyā kathāya sandassemi samādapemi samuttejemi sampahaṃsemi. Bhāsamaṇāṅka maṃ na jānanti — ‘Ko nu kho ayaṃ bhāsati devo vā manusso vā’ti? Dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā antaradhāyāmi.*

Antarahitañca maṃ na jānanti — Ko nu kho ayaṃ antarahito devo vā manusso vā'ti? Imā kho, Ānanda, atṭha parisā.

172. “Ānanda, there are eight kinds of assemblies. What eight? Assemblies of nobles, priests, householders, recluses, deities of the Four Great Kings, deities of the Thirty-three, Māras, and Brahmas.

“I recall, Ānanda, how when I used to enter an assembly of many hundreds of nobles, before I had seated myself there or talked to them or started a conversation with them, I used to become the same colour as them, and with a voice like theirs, I used to instruct, rouse, enthuse, and gladden them with religious discourse. However, they did not know me when I spoke, and would say, “Who is this who speaks? Is he a man or a god?” Then having instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened them with religious discourse, I would vanish, but they did not know me when I vanished; and would say, “Who was this who has thus vanished? Was he a man or a god?”

In the same words the Blessed One spoke of how he used to enter each of the eight kinds of assemblies, and how he had not been known to them either in speaking or in vanishing.

“These, Ānanda, are the eight assemblies.”

The Eight Stages of Mastery (*Atṭha Abhibhāyatanāni*)

173. *“Atṭha kho imāni, Ānanda, abhibhāyatanāni. Katamāni atṭha? Ajjhattaṃ rūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati parittāni suvaṇṇadubbañṇāni. ‘Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi’ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ paṭhamamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.*

“Ajjhattaṃ rūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati appamañṇāni suvaṇṇadubbañṇāni. ‘Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi’ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ dutiyamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.

“Ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati parittāni suvaṇṇadubbañṇāni. ‘Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi’ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ tatiyamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.

“Ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati appamañṇāni suvaṇṇadubbañṇāni. ‘Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi’ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ catutthamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.

“Ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati nīlāni nīlavañṇāni nīlanidassanāni nīlanibhāsāni. Seyyathāpi nāma umāpupphaṃ nīlaṃ nīlavañṇaṃ nīlanidassanaṃ nīlanibhāsaṃ. Seyyathā vā pana taṃ vatthaṃ bārāṇaseyyakaṃ

ubhatobhāgavimaṭṭhaṃ nīlaṃ nīlavaṇṇaṃ nīlanidassanaṃ nīlanibhāsaṃ. Evameva ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati nīlāni nīlavaṇṇāni nīlanidassanāni nīlanibhāsāni. 'Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi' ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ pañcamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.

"Ajhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati pītāni pītavaṇṇāni pītanidassanāni pītanibhāsāni. Seyyathāpi nāma kaṇikārapupphaṃ pītaṃ pītavaṇṇaṃ pītanidassanaṃ pītanibhāsaṃ. Seyyathā vā pana taṃ vatthaṃ bārāṇaseyyakaṃ ubhatobhāgavimaṭṭhaṃ pītaṃ pītavaṇṇaṃ pītanidassanaṃ pītanibhāsaṃ. Evameva ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati pītāni pītavaṇṇāni pītanidassanāni pītanibhāsāni. 'Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi' ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ chaṭṭhaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.

"Ajhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati lohitaḥāni lohitaḥāvaṇṇāni lohitaḥānidassanāni lohitaḥānibhāsāni. Seyyathāpi nāma bandhuJivakapupphaṃ lohitaḥāni lohitaḥāvaṇṇaṃ lohitaḥānidassanaṃ lohitaḥānibhāsaṃ. Seyyathā vā pana taṃ vatthaṃ bārāṇaseyyakaṃ ubhatobhāgavimaṭṭhaṃ lohitaḥāni lohitaḥāvaṇṇaṃ lohitaḥānidassanaṃ lohitaḥānibhāsaṃ. Evameva ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati lohitaḥāni lohitaḥāvaṇṇāni lohitaḥānidassanāni lohitaḥānibhāsāni. 'Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi' ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ sattamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ.

"Ajhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati odātāni odātavaṇṇāni odātānidassanāni odātānibhāsāni. Seyyathāpi nāma osadhitārakā odātā odātavaṇṇā odātānidassanā odātānibhāsā. Seyyathā vā pana taṃ vatthaṃ bārāṇaseyyakaṃ ubhatobhāgavimaṭṭhaṃ odātāni odātavaṇṇaṃ odātānidassanaṃ odātānibhāsaṃ. Evameva ajjhattaṃ arūpasaññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati odātāni odātavaṇṇāni odātānidassanāni odātānibhāsāni. 'Tāni abhibhuyya jānāmi passāmi' ti evaṃsaññī hoti. Idaṃ aṭṭhamaṃ abhibhāyatanaṃ. Imāni kho, Ānanda, aṭṭha abhibhāyatanaṃ.

173. "These, Ānanda, are the eight stages of mastery [over the delusion arising from the apparent permanence of external things]. What are the eight?

"When a man having subjectively the idea of form sees externally forms which are finite, and pleasant or unpleasant to the sight, and having mastered them, is conscious that he knows and sees — this is the first stage of mastery.

"When a man having subjectively the idea of form sees externally forms which are boundless, and pleasant or unpleasant to the sight, and having mastered them is conscious that he knows and sees — this is the second stage of mastery.

“When a man without the subjective idea of form sees externally forms which are finite, and pleasant or unpleasant to the sight, and having mastered them, is conscious that he knows and sees — this is the third stage of mastery.

“When a man without the subjective idea of form sees externally forms which are boundless, and pleasant or unpleasant to the sight, and having mastered them, is conscious that he knows and sees — this is the fourth stage of mastery.

“When a man without the subjective idea of form sees externally forms that are blue in colour, blue in appearance, and reflecting blue — just, for instance, as the Umā flower is blue in colour, blue in appearance, and reflecting blue; or, again, as that fine muslin of Benares which, on whichever side you look at it, is blue in colour, blue in appearance, and reflecting blue, — when a man without the subjective idea of form sees externally forms which, just in that way, are blue, blue in colour, blue in appearance, and reflecting blue, and having mastered them, is conscious that he knows and sees — that is the fifth stage of mastery.”

[The sixth, seventh, and eighth stages of mastery are explained in words identical with those used to explain the fifth; save that yellow, red, and white are respectively substituted for blue; and the Kaṇikāra flower, the Bandhujīvaka flower, and the Morning Star (Osadhitārakā) are respectively substituted for the Umā flower, as the first of the two objects given as examples.]

The Eight Liberations

(*Aṭṭha Vimokkhā*)

174. *“Aṭṭha kho ime, Ānanda, vimokkhā. Katame aṭṭha? Rūpī rūpāni passati, ayaṃ paṭhamo vimokkho. Ajjhataṃ arūpasaññī bahiddhā rūpāni passati, ayaṃ dutiyo vimokkho. Subhanteva adhimutto hoti, ayaṃ tatiyo vimokkho. Sabbaso rūpasaññānaṃ samatikkamā paṭighasaññānaṃ atthaṅgamā nānattasaññānaṃ amanasikārā ‘Ananto ākāso’ ti ākāsañācāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati, ayaṃ catuttho vimokkho. Sabbaso ākāsañācāyatanaṃ samatikkamma ‘Anantaṃ viññāna’nti viññānañācāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati, ayaṃ pañcama vimokkho. Sabbaso viññānañācāyatanaṃ samatikkamma ‘Natthi kiñcī’ ti ākiñcaññāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati, ayaṃ chaṭṭho vimokkho. Sabbaso ākiñcaññāyatanaṃ samatikkamma nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati. Ayaṃ sattamo vimokkho. Sabbaso nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ samatikkamma saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ upasampajja viharati, ayaṃ aṭṭhama vimokkho. Ime kho, Ānanda, aṭṭha vimokkhā.*

174. “These are the eight liberations Ānanda [from the hindrance to thought arising from the sensations and ideas due to external forms]. What are the eight?

“A man possessed with the idea of form sees forms — this is the first liberation.

“Without the subjective idea of form, he sees forms externally—this is the second liberation.

“With the thought ‘It is well,’ he becomes intent (upon what he sees) — this is the third liberation.

“By passing quite beyond all idea of form, by putting an end to all idea of resistance, by paying no attention to the idea of distinction, he, thinking ‘It is all infinite space,’ reaches and remains in the state of mind in which the idea of the infinity of space is the only idea that is present — this is the fourth liberation.

“By passing quite beyond all idea of space being the infinite basis, he, thinking ‘It is all infinite consciousness,’ reaches and remains in the state of mind to which the infinity of reason is alone present — this is the fifth liberation.

“By passing quite beyond the infinity of consciousness, he, thinking ‘nothing at all exists,’ reaches and remains in the state of mind to which nothing at all is specially present — this is the sixth liberation.

“By passing quite beyond nothingness he reaches and remains in the state of mind to which neither perception nor non-perception are specially present — this is the seventh liberation.

“By passing quite beyond the state of neither perception nor non-perception he reaches and remains in the state of mind in which both feeling and perception have ceased — this is the eighth liberation.

“These, Ānanda, are the eight liberations.”

175. “*Ekamidāhaṃ, Ānanda, samayaṃ Uruvelāyaṃ viharāmi najjā nerañjarāya tīre ajapālanigrodhe paṭhamābhisambuddho. Atha kho, Ānanda, māro pāpimā yenāhaṃ tenupasāṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā ekamantaṃ atthāsi. Ekamantaṃ ṭhito kho, Ānanda, māro pāpimā maṃ etada voca — ‘Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā; parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato’ti. Evaṃ vutte ahaṃ, Ānanda, māraṃ pāpimantaṃ etadavocaṃ —*

“*Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me bhikkhū na sāvakā bhavissanti viyattā vinītā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭipannā sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacārino, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti*

desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānikarissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappātihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti.

“Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me bhikkhuniyo na sāvikā bhavissanti viyattā vinītā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānu-dhammappaṭiṭṭhānā sāmīcippaṭiṭṭhānā anudhammacāriniyo, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānikarissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappātihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti.

“Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me upāsakā na sāvakā bhavissanti viyattā vinītā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānu-dhammappaṭiṭṭhānā sāmīcippaṭiṭṭhānā anudhammacārino, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānikarissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappātihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti.

“Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me upāsikā na sāvikā bhavissanti viyattā vinītā visāradā bahussutā dhammadharā dhammānudhammappaṭiṭṭhānā sāmīcippaṭiṭṭhānā anudhammacāriniyo, sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessanti paññapessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttānikarissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappātihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessanti.

“Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me idaṃ brahmacariyaṃ na iddhañceva bhavissati phītañca vitthārikaṃ bāhujaññaṃ puthubhūtaṃ yāva devamanussehi suppakāsita’nti.

175. “On one occasion, Ānanda, I was resting under the Goat-herd’s Banyan (Ajapālanigrodha) tree on the bank of the river Nerañjarā immediately after having attained Enlightenment. Then, Ānanda, Māra the Evil One came to where I was, and standing beside me he addressed me in the words: ‘Pass away from existence now, Venerable sir! Let the Blessed One now die! Now is the time for the Blessed One to pass away!’

“When he had thus spoken, Ānanda, I addressed Māra, the Evil One, saying: ‘I shall not die, Evil One, until the monks and nuns, and also the male and female lay-disciples have become true disciples, wise and well-trained, ready and learned, versed in the scriptures, fulfilling all the greater and the lesser duties, correct in life, living according to the precepts — until they, having thus themselves learned the doctrine, shall be able to tell others

of it, teach it, make it known, establish it, open it, minutely explain it and make it clear — until they, when others start false teachings, are able to vanquish and refute it by the truth, and so spread the wonder-working truth abroad! “I shall not die until this pure religion of mine shall have become successful, prosperous, wide-spread, and popular in all its full extent — until, in a word, it shall have been well proclaimed among men!”

176. *“Idāneva kho, Ānanda, ajja cāpāle cetiye māro pāpimā yenāhaṃ tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā ekamantaṃ atthāsi. Ekamantaṃ ʈhito kho, Ānanda, māro pāpimā maṃ etadavoca — ‘Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato. Bhāsitā kho panesā, bhante, Bhagavatā vācā — ‘Na tāvāhaṃ, pāpima, parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me bhikkhū na sāvaka bhavissanti ... Yāva me bhikkhuniyo na sāvika bhavissanti ... Yāva me upāsakā na sāvaka bhavissanti ... Yāva me upāsikā na sāvika bhavissanti ... Yāva me idaṃ brahmacariyaṃ na iddhañceva bhavissati phītañca vitthārikaṃ bāhujaiññaṃ puthubhūtaṃ, yāva devamanussehi suppakāsita’nti. Etarahi kho pana, bhante, Bhagavato brahmacariyaṃ iddhañceva phītañca vitthārikaṃ bāhujaiññaṃ puthubhūtaṃ, yāva devamanussehi suppakāsitaṃ. Parinibbātudāni, bhante, Bhagavā, parinibbātu sugato, parinibbānakālodāni, bhante, Bhagavato’ti.*

176. “Again today, Ānanda, at the Cāpāla shrine, Mara, the Evil One, came to where I was, and standing beside me addressed me [in the same words].

177. *“Evaṃ vutte, ahaṃ, Ānanda, māraṃ pāpimantaṃ etadavocaṃ — ‘Apposukko tvaṃ, pāpima, hohi, naciraṃ Tathāgataṃ parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Ito tiṅṅaṃ māsānaṃ accayena Tathāgato parinibbāyissati’ti. Idāneva kho, Ānanda, ajja cāpāle cetiye Tathāgatena satena sampajānena āyusaṅkhāro ossaʈṭho’ti.*

177. “When he had thus spoken, Ānanda, I answered him saying: ‘Be happy, the final demise of the Tathāgata will occur before long. Three months from now the Tathāgata will die!’ Thus, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has now today at the Cāpāla shrine consciously and deliberately rejected the rest of his allotted term of life.”

The Account of Venerable Ānanda’s Request (Ānandayācanakathā)

178. *Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — ‘Tiṅṅhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kappam, tiṅṅhatu sugato kappam bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna’nti.*

“Alaṃdāni, Ānanda. Mā Tathāgataṃ yāci, akālodāni, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yācanāyā”ti. Dutiyampi kho āyasmā Ānando ... Tatiyampi kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kammaṃ, tiṭṭhatu sugato kammaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya athāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna”nti.

“Saddhasi tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgatassa bodhi”nti? “Evaṃ, bhante.” “Atha kiñcarahi tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yāvattatīyakaṃ abhinippīlesi”ti? “Sammukhā metvaṃ, bhante, Bhagavato sutvaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ — ‘Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā, so ākaṅkhamāno kammaṃ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṃ vā. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā. So ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kammaṃ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṃ vā”ti. “Saddhasi tvaṃ, Ānanda”ti? “Evaṃ, bhante.” “Tasmātiḥ Ānanda, tuyhevetvaṃ dukkaṭaṃ, tuyhevetvaṃ aparaddhaṃ, yaṃ tvaṃ Tathāgatena evaṃ olārike nimitte kayiramāne olārike obhāse kayiramāne nāsakkhi pativijjhitaṃ, na Tathāgataṃ yāci — ‘Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kammaṃ, tiṭṭhatu sugato kammaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya athāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna”nti. Sace tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yāceyyāsi, dveva te vācā Tathāgato paṭikkhipeyya, atha tatiyakaṃ adhivāseyya. Tasmātiḥ Ānanda, tuyhevetvaṃ dukkaṭaṃ, tuyhevetvaṃ aparaddhaṃ.

178. When he had spoken thus the Venerable Ānanda addressed the Blessed One, saying: “Resolve, Venerable sir, to remain for the remaining lifespan! Live on throughout the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!”

“Enough, Ānanda, do not beseech the Tathāgata,” he replied, “The time for making such a request is past.”

A second and a third time, the Venerable Ānanda besought the Blessed One [in the same words, and received from the Blessed One the same reply].

“Do you have faith, Ānanda, in the wisdom of the Tathāgata?”

“Yes, Venerable sir!”

“Why, then, Ānanda, do you trouble the Tathāgata even up to the third time?”

“From his own mouth have I heard from the Blessed One, from his own mouth have I received this saying, ‘Whosoever has developed, made much off, made them his vehicle and support, and ascended to the summit of the four bases of success, and has mastered them, if he wished could remain in

the same birth for a lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that had yet to run. The Tathāgata has [done this], and he could, should he so wish, live on for a full lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that has yet to run.”

“Do you have faith, Ānanda?”

“Yes, Venerable sir!”

“Then, Ānanda, the fault is yours, yours is the offence, in that when a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear were given by the Tathāgata, you were incapable of comprehending, and did not then beseech the Tathāgata, saying: “Resolve, Venerable sir, to remain for the remaining lifespan! Live on throughout the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!”

If you had done so, the Tathāgata might have rejected the appeal even to the second time, but the third time he would have granted it. Therefore, Ānanda, the fault is yours, the offence is yours!”

179. *“Ekamidāhaṃ, Ānanda, samayaṃ Rājagahe viharāmi gijjhakūte pabbate. Tatrāpi kho tāhaṃ, Ānanda, āmantesiṃ — ‘Ramaṇiyaṃ, Ānanda, Rājagahaṃ, ramaṇiyo, Ānanda, gijjhakūto pabbato. Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā, so ākaṅkhamāno kammaṃ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṃ vā. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā, so ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kammaṃ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṃ vā’ti. Evampi kho tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgatena oḷārike nimitte kayiramāne oḷārike obhāse kayiramāne nāsakkhi paṭivijjhituṃ, na Tathāgataṃ yāci — ‘Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kammaṃ, tiṭṭhatu sugato kammaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna’nti. Sace tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yāceyyāsi, dve te vācā Tathāgato paṭikkhipeyya, atha tatiyakam adhvāseyya. Tasmātiḥ Ānanda, tuyhevetam dukkaṭam, tuyhevetam aparaddham.*

179. “On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling at Rājagaha, on the hill called the Vulture’s Peak. There, Ānanda, I spoke to you, saying: “How pleasant a spot, Ānanda, is Rājagaha; how pleasant is this Vulture’s Peak. Whosoever has developed, made much off, made them his vehicle and support, and ascended to the summit of the four bases of success, and has mastered them, if he wished could remain in the same birth for a lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that had yet to run. The Tathāgata has [done this], and he could, should he so wish, live on for a full lifespan, or for that

portion of the lifespan that has yet to run.' However, even when a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear were given by the Tathāgata, you were incapable of comprehending, and did not beseech the Tathāgata, saying, "Resolve, Venerable sir, to remain for the remaining lifespan! Live on throughout the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!"

If you had done so, the Tathāgata might have rejected the appeal even to the second time, but the third time he would have granted it. Therefore, Ānanda, the fault is yours, the offence is yours!"

180. *"Ekamidāhaṃ, Ānanda, samayaṃ tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi Gotamanigrodhe ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi corapapāte ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi vebhārapasse sattapaṇṇiguhāyaṃ ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi isigilipasse kālasilāyaṃ ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi sītavane sappasonḍikapabbhāre ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi tapodārāme ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi veḷuvane kalandakanivāpe ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi Jivakambavane ... Tattheva Rājagahe viharāmi maddakucchismiṃ migadāye tatrāpi kho tāhaṃ, Ānanda, āmantesiṃ — 'Ramaṇīyaṃ, Ānanda, Rājagahaṃ, ramaṇīyo gijjhakūṭo pabbato, ramaṇīyo Gotamanigrodho, ramaṇīyo corapapāto, ramaṇīyā vebhārapasse sattapaṇṇiguhā, ramaṇīyā isigilipasse kālasilā, ramaṇīyo sītavane sappasonḍikapabbhāro, ramaṇīyo tapodārāmo, ramaṇīyo veḷuvane kalandakanivāpo, ramaṇīyaṃ Jivakambavanam, ramaṇīyo maddakucchismiṃ migadāyo. Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikātā yānikātā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricītā susamāraddhā ... Ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesam vā'ti. Evampi kho tovaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgatena oḷārike nimitte kayiramāne oḷārike obhāse kayiramāne nāsakkhi paṭivijjhitaṃ, na Tathāgataṃ yāci — 'Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kappam, tiṭṭhatu sugato kappam bahujaṇahitāya bahujaṇasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna'nti. Sace tovaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yāceyyāsi, dveva te vācā Tathāgato paṭikkhipeyya, atha tatiyakam adhivāseyya. Tasmātiḥ Ānanda, tuyhevetam dukkaṭam, tuyhevetam aparaddham.*

180. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling at that same Rājagaha in the Banyan Grove — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha at the Robbers' Cliff (Corapapāta) — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha in the **Sattapaṇṇi** cave on the slope of Mount **Veḷhāra** — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha at the Black Rock (**Kālasilā**) on the slope of Mount Isigili — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha in the **Sītavana** Grove in the mountain cave **Sappasonḍika** — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha in the **Tapoda**

Monastery — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove in the Squirrels' Feeding Ground (*Kalandakanipāva*) — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha in *Jīvaka's Mango Grove* — on one occasion at that same Rājagaha in the Deer Forest at *Maddakucchi*.

There too, Ānanda, I spoke to you saying: "How pleasant a spot, Ānanda, is Rājagaha; how pleasant the Vulture's Peak; how pleasant the Banyan tree of Gotama; how pleasant the Robbers' Cliff; how pleasant the Sattapaṇṇi cave on the slope of Mount Vebhāra; how pleasant the Black Rock on the slope of Mount Isigili; how pleasant the mountain cave Sappasonḍika in the Sītavana Grove; how pleasant the Tapoda Monastery; how pleasant the Squirrels' Feeding Ground in the Bamboo Grove; how pleasant Jīvaka's Mango Grove; how pleasant the Deer Forest at Maddakucchi!

"Whosoever has developed, made much off, made them his vehicle and support, and ascended to the summit of the four bases of success, and has mastered them, if he wished could remain in the same birth for a lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that had yet to run. The Tathāgata has [done this], and he could, should he so wish, live on for a full lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that has yet to run."

However, even when a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear were given by the Tathāgata, you were incapable of comprehending, and did not beseech the Tathāgata, saying, "Resolve, Venerable sir, to remain for the remaining lifespan! Live on throughout the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!"

181. *"Ekamidāhaṃ, Ānanda, samayaṃ idheva Vesāliyaṃ viharāmi udene cetiye. Tatrāpi kho tāhaṃ, Ānanda, āmantesiṃ — 'Ramaṇiyyā, Ānanda, Vesālī, ramaṇiyyaṃ udenaṃ cetiyaṃ. Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikāṭā yānikāṭā vatthukāṭā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā, so ākaṅkhamāno kammaṃ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṃ vā. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvītā bahulikāṭā yānikāṭā vatthukāṭā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā, so ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kammaṃ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṃ vā'ti. Evampi kho tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgatena oḷārike nimitte kayiramāne oḷārike obhāse kayiramāne nāsakkhi paṭivijjhitaṃ, na Tathāgataṃ yāci — 'Tiṭṭhatu, bhante, Bhagavā kammaṃ, tiṭṭhatu sugato kammaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna'nti. Sace tvaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yāceyyāsi, dveva te vācā Tathāgato paṭikkhipeyya, atha tatiyakaṃ adhvāseyya, tasmātiḥ Ānanda, tuyhevetāṃ dukkaṭaṃ, tuyhevetāṃ aparaddhaṃ.*

181. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was residing here at Vesāli at the Udena shrine. Here too, Ānanda, I spoke to you saying: 'How pleasant, Ānanda, is Vesāli; how pleasant the Udena shrine. Whosoever has developed, made much off, made them his vehicle and support, and ascended to the summit of the four bases of success, and has mastered them, if he wished could remain in the same birth for a lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that had yet to run. The Tathāgata has [done this], and he could, should he so wish, live on for a full lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that has yet to run.'

However, even when a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear were given by the Tathāgata, you were incapable of comprehending, and did not beseech the Tathāgata, saying, "Resolve, Venerable sir, to remain for the remaining lifespan! Live on throughout the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!"

182. *"Ekamidāhaṃ, Ānanda, samayaṃ idheva Vesāliyaṃ viharāmi Gotamake cetiye ... Idheva Vesāliyaṃ viharāmi sattambe cetiye ... Idheva Vesāliyaṃ viharāmi bahuputte cetiye ... Idheva Vesāliyaṃ viharāmi sārandaḍḍe cetiye ... Idāneva kho tāhaṃ, Ānanda, ajja cāpāle cetiye āmantesiṃ — 'Ramaṇiya, Ānanda, Vesāli, ramaṇiyaṃ udenaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇiyaṃ Gotamakaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇiyaṃ sattambaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇiyaṃ bahuputtaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇiyaṃ sārandaḍḍaṃ cetiyaṃ, ramaṇiyaṃ cāpālaṃ cetiyaṃ. Yassa kassaci, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvitā bahulikāṭā yānikāṭā vatthukāṭā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā, so ākaṅkhamāno kappamī vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesamī vā. Tathāgatassa kho, Ānanda, cattāro iddhipādā bhāvitā bahulikāṭā yānikāṭā vatthukāṭā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā, so ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, Tathāgato kappamī vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesamī vā'ti. Evampi kho toaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgatenā oḷārike nimitte kayiramāṇe oḷārike obhāse kayiramāṇe nāsakkhi paṭivijjhituṃ, na Tathāgataṃ yāci — 'Tiṭṭhatu Bhagavā kappamī, tiṭṭhatu sugato kappamī bahujaṇahitāya bahujaṇasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna'nti. Sace toaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgataṃ yāceyyāsi, dveva te vācā Tathāgato paṭikkhipeyya, atha tatiyakaṃ adhvīvāseyya. Tasmātiḥ Ānanda, tuyhevetamī dukkaṭamī, tuyhevetamī aparaddhamī.*

182. "Today, Ānanda, at the Cāpāla shrine, I spoke to you, saying: 'How pleasant, Ānanda, is Vesāli; how pleasant the Udena shrine; how pleasant the Gotamaka shrine; how pleasant the Sattamba shrine; how pleasant the Bahuputta shrine; how pleasant the Sārandaḍḍa shrine.

“Whosoever has developed, made much off, made them his vehicle and support, and ascended to the summit of the four bases of success, and has mastered them, if he wished could remain in the same birth for a lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that had yet to run. The Tathāgata has [done this], and he could, should he so wish, live on for a full lifespan, or for that portion of the lifespan that has yet to run.”

However, even when a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear were given by the Tathāgata, you were incapable of comprehending, and did not beseech the Tathāgata, saying, “Resolve, Venerable sir, to remain for the remaining lifespan! Live on throughout the lifespan, Blessed One, for the good and the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!”

183. *“Nanu etaṃ, Ānanda, mayā paṭikacceva akkhātaṃ — ‘Sabbeheva piyehi manāpehi nānābhāvo vinābhāvo aññathābhāvo. Taṃ kutettha, Ānanda, labbhā, yaṃ taṃ jātaṃ bhūtaṃ saṅkhatāṃ palokadhammaṃ, taṃ vata mā palujjiti netāṃ thānaṃ vijjati’. Yaṃ kho panetaṃ, Ānanda, Tathāgatena cattaṃ vantaṃ muttaṃ pahīnaṃ paṭinissatthaṃ ossattho āyusaṅkhāro, ekamsena vācā bhāsita — ‘Na ciraṃ Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Ito tiṅgaṃ māsānaṃ accayena Tathāgato parinibbāyissati’ ti. Taṅca Tathāgato jīvitaṃ puna paccāvamissati ti netāṃ thānaṃ vijjati. Āyāmaṃ Ānanda, yena mahāvanaṃ kūṭāgārasālā tenupasaṅkamissāmā” ti. “Evaṃ, bhante” ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi.*

Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmatā Ānandena saddhiṃ yena mahāvanaṃ kūṭāgārasālā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitoā āyasmantaṃ Ānantaṃ āmantesi — “Gaccha tvaṃ, Ānanda, yāvaticā bhikkhū Vesāliṃ upanissāya viharanti, te sabbe upatthānasālāyaṃ sannipātehi” ti. “Evaṃ, bhante” ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā yāvaticā bhikkhū Vesāliṃ upanissāya viharanti, te sabbe upatthānasālāyaṃ sannipātetoā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitoā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi. Ekamantaṃ thito kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Sannipatito, bhante, bhikkhusaṅgho, yassadāni, bhante, Bhagavā kālaṃ maññati” ti.

183. “However, Ānanda, have I not formerly declared to you that it is in the very nature of all things, near and dear to us, that we must divide ourselves from them, leave them, sever ourselves from them? How then, Ānanda, can this be possible — whereas anything whatever born, brought into being, and organised, contains within itself the inherent necessity of dissolution — how then can it be possible that such a being should not be dissolved? No such condition can exist! This mortal being, Ānanda, has been relinquished, cast

away, renounced, rejected, and abandoned by the Tathāgata. The remaining sum of life has been surrendered by him. Verily, the word has gone forth from the Tathāgata, saying, 'The final demise of the Tathāgata will take place before long. Three months from now the Tathāgata will die!' That the Tathāgata for the sake of living could repent that saying — this can no wise be!"

"Come, Ānanda, let us go to the Kūṭāgāra Hall at Mahāvana."

"Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

Then the Blessed One proceeded with Ānanda to the Kūṭāgāra Hall at Mahāvana, and when he had arrived he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: "Go, Ānanda, and assemble in the Service Hall the monks residing in the neighbourhood of Vesāli."

"Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent. When he had assembled in the Service Hall the monks residing in the neighbourhood of Vesāli, he went to the Blessed One, paid homage, and stood at one side. Standing there, he addressed the Blessed One, saying, 'Venerable sir! The monks have assembled. Let the Blessed One do as he deems fit.'

184. *Atha kho Bhagavā yenupaṭṭhānasālā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā paññatte āsane nisīdi. Nisajja kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — "Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, ye te mayā dhammā abhiññā desitā, te vo sādhukaṃ uggahetoṃ āsevitabbā bhāvetabbā bahulikātabbā, yathayidaṃ brahmacariyaṃ addhaniyaṃ assa ciratṭhitikaṃ, tadassa bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ. Katame ca te, bhikkhave, dhammā mayā abhiññā desitā, ye vo sādhukaṃ uggahetoṃ āsevitabbā bhāvetabbā bahulikātabbā, yathayidaṃ brahmacariyaṃ addhaniyaṃ assa ciratṭhitikaṃ, tadassa bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ. Seyyathidaṃ — cattāro satipaṭṭhānā cattāro sammappadhānā cattāro iddhipādā pañcindriyāni pañca balāni satta bojjhaṅgā ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo. Ime kho te, bhikkhave, dhammā mayā abhiññā desitā, ye vo sādhukaṃ uggahetoṃ āsevitabbā bhāvetabbā bahulikātabbā, yathayidaṃ brahmacariyaṃ addhaniyaṃ assa ciratṭhitikaṃ, tadassa bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ"nti.*

184. Then the Blessed One proceeded to the Service Hall, and sat down there on the mat spread out for him. When he was seated the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying, "Therefore, monks — you to whom the truths I have perceived have been made known by me — having thoroughly mastered them, practised them, meditated on them, spread them abroad so that the pure religion may endure and be perpetuated, so that it may continue

for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men!

“What then, monks, are the truths that, when I had perceived them, I made known to you, which, when you have mastered it behoves you to practise, meditate on, and spread abroad, in order that pure religion may last long and be perpetuated, in order that it may endure for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men?”

They are these: the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), the four right exertions (*cattāro sammappadhānā*), the four bases of success (*cattāro iddhipādā*), the five spiritual faculties (*pañcīndriyāni*), the five spiritual powers (*pañca balāni*), the seven factors of enlightenment (*satta bojjhaṅgā*), and the noble eightfold path (*ariyo atthaṅgiko maggo*). These, monks, are the truths that, when I had perceived them, I made known to you, which, when you have mastered them it behoves you to practise, contemplate, and spread abroad, so that the pure religion may endure and be perpetuated, so that it may continue for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and the happiness of gods and men!”

Together, these thirty-seven spiritual faculties are known as the Requisites of Enlightenment (*Bodhipakkhiyadhammā*). They are described in the late Venerable Ledi Sayādaw’s *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī*. The term is used in numerous places in the Pāli texts, but as far as I could tell with a quick search, only in this place are all thirty-seven taught together.

185. *Atha kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Handadāni, bhikkhave, āmantayāmi vo, veyadhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādetha. Naciraṃ Tathāgataṃ parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Ito tiṇṇaṃ māśānaṃ accayena Tathāgato parinibbāyissati”ti. Idamavoca Bhagavā, idaṃ vatvāna sugato athāparaṃ etada voca satthā*

*“Paripakko vayo mayhaṃ, parittaṃ mama jīvitaṃ.
pahāya vo gamissāmi, kataṃ me saraṇamattano.*

*“Appamattā satīmanto, susilā hotha bhikkhavo.
susamāhitasāṅkappā, sacittamanurakkhatha.*

*“Yo imasmiṃ dhammavinaye, appamatto vihassati.
pahāya jātisaṃsāraṃ, dukkhassantaṃ karissati”ti.*

Tatiyo Bhāṇavāro

185. The Blessed One further exhorted the monks, saying, “Behold, monks, I exhort you, saying, all compounded things must decay (*veyadhammā*

sarikhārā). Strive with diligence (*appamādena sampādetha*). The final demise of the Tathāgata will take place before long. Three months from now the Tathāgata will die!”

This statement about the time of the Buddha's demise is interesting, occurring as it does at the end of the Rains Retreat in October. Three months from October would be in January. Traditionally, most Buddhists of the Theravāda school celebrate the thrice-sacred day on the Full-moon of May, which is said to commemorate the Birth, Enlightenment, and Final decease of the Blessed One. See [paragraph 165](#) where the Buddha states that he is more than eighty years of age, so if the tradition were true he would have died at eight-one years of age, if it occurred on the following May.

To my way of thinking, there is something more natural about his death occurring during the coldest and darkest months of winter, when vitality is at its lowest ebb. In both cases, when speaking to the Venerable Ānanda, and later, when speaking to the monks, the Buddha says: “Three months from now.” These two statements must, therefore, have been made on the same day, or perhaps on consecutive days otherwise Māra would have appeared again three months after the first statement to ask why the Buddha had not yet passed away. From that it follows that the assembling of the monks and the Buddha's statement to them must have occurred on the full-moon day of October, and that the Parinibbāna would occur on the full-moon day of the following January — neither sooner, nor later than that.

“My age is now full ripe, my life draws to its close.
I leave you, I depart, relying on myself alone!
Be heedful and mindful, monks, and virtuous!
Be steadfast in resolve! Guard your minds well!
Who wearies not, but holds fast to the Dhamma and discipline,
Shall cross this sea of life, shall make an end of grief.’

End of the Third Portion for Recitation

The Elephant's Gaze (*Nāgāpalokitaṃ*)

186. *Atha kho Bhagavā pubbaṅhasamayaṃ nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya Vesāliṃ piṇḍāya pāvīsi. Vesāliyaṃ piṇḍāya caritvā pacchābhattaṃ piṇḍa-pātappatikkanto nāgāpalokitaṃ Vesāliṃ apaloketvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Idaṃ pacchimakam, Ānanda, Tathāgatassa Vesāliyā dassanaṃ*

bhavissati. Āyāmañānanda, yena bhaṇḍagāmo tenupasaṅkamissāmā"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi.

Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena bhaṇḍagāmo tadavasari. Tatra sudam Bhagavā bhaṇḍagāme viharati. Tatra kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — "Catunnaṃ, bhikkhave, dhammānaṃ ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidaṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitam saṃsaritam mamañceva tumhākañca. Katamesaṃ catunnaṃ? Ariyassa, bhikkhave, sīlassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidaṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitam saṃsaritam mamañceva tumhākañca. Ariyassa, bhikkhave, samādhissa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidaṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitam saṃsaritam mamañceva tumhākañca. Ariyāya, bhikkhave, paññāya ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidaṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitam saṃsaritam mamañceva tumhākañca. Ariyāya, bhikkhave, vimuttiyā ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evamidaṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ sandhāvitam saṃsaritam mamañceva tumhākañca. Tayidaṃ, bhikkhave, ariyaṃ sīlaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ, ariyo samādhi anubuddho paṭividdho, ariyā paññā anubuddhā paṭividdhā, ariyā vimutti anubuddhā paṭividdhā, ucchinnā bhavataṇhā, khīṇā bhavanetti, natthi dāni punabbhavo"ti. Idamavoca Bhagavā, idaṃ vatvāna sugato athāparaṃ etadavoca satthā —

"Sīlaṃ samādhi paññā ca, vimutti ca anuttarā.
anubuddhā ime dhammā, Gotamena yasassinā.

"Iti buddho abhiññāya, dhammamakkhāsi bhikkhunaṃ.
dukkhassantakaro satthā, cakkhumā parinibbuto"ti.

Tatrāpi sudam Bhagavā bhaṇḍagāme viharanto etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti — "Iti sīlaṃ, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso. Samādhiparibhāvita paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā"ti.

186. Now the Blessed One early in the morning robed himself, and taking his bowl, entered Vesāli for alms: and when he had passed through Vesāli, and had eaten his meal and was returning from his alms-seeking he gazed at Vesāli with an elephant look¹ and addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, "This will be the last time, Ānanda, that the Tathāgata will behold Vesāli. Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Bhaṇḍagāma."

"Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

¹ Turning the whole body around to look.

The Blessed One proceeded with a great company of monks to Bhaṇḍagāma; and there the Blessed One stayed in the village itself. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: “It is through not understanding and comprehending four truths, monks, that we have had to wander so long in this weary cycle of existence — both you and I.

“What are these four? The noble morality, the noble concentration, the noble wisdom, and the noble liberation. However, when noble morality is realised and known, when noble concentration is realised and known, when noble wisdom is realised and known, when noble liberation is realised and known — then the craving for existence is rooted out, that which leads to renewed existence is destroyed, and there is no more birth.”

Thus spoke the Blessed One; and when the Fortunate One had spoken, again the teacher said:

“Morality, concentration, wisdom, and incomparable liberation –
These are the truths realised by Gotama, the far-renowned.

Knowing them, the knower proclaimed the truth to the monks.
The master with the divine-eye, the quencher of grief, must die!”

There too, while staying at Bhaṇḍagāma, the Blessed One gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. “Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance.”

The Four Great References

(*Catumahāpadesakathā*)

187. *Atha kho Bhagavā bhaṇḍagāme yathābhirantaṃ viharito āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmaṇānanda, yena haṭṭhigāmo, yena ambagāmo, yena jambugāmo, yena bhoganagaraṃ tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena bhoganagaraṃ tadavasari. Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā bhoganagare viharati Ānande cetiye. Tatra kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Cattārome, bhikkhave, mahāpadese desessāmi, taṃ suṇātha, sādhukaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmi”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho te bhikkhū Bhagavato paccassosuṃ. Bhagavā etadavoca —*

187. When the Blessed One had remained at Bhaṇḍagāma as long as he wished, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Hatthigāma, to Ambagāma, to Gambugāma, and to Bhoganagara.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

Then the Blessed One proceeded with a great company of monks to Bhoganagara. There at Bhoganagara the Blessed One stayed at the Ānanda shrine. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: “I will teach you, monks, the four great references. Listen, and pay heed, I will speak.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the monks replied in assent, and the Blessed One spoke as follows:

188. *‘Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu evaṃ vadeyya — ‘Sammukhā metaṃ, āvuso, Bhagavato suttaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ, ayaṃ dhammo ayaṃ vinayo idaṃ satthusāsana’nti. Tassa, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno bhāsitaṃ neva abhinanditabbaṃ nappaṭikkositabbaṃ. Anabhinanditoṃ appaṭikkositoṃ tāni padabyañjanāni sādhukaṃ uggahetoṃ sutte osāretabbāni, vinaye sandassetabbāni. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni vinaye sandassiyamānāni na ceva sutte osaranti, na ca vinaye sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ na ceva tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; imassa ca bhikkhuno duggahita’nti. Itihetaṃ, bhikkhave, chaḍḍeyyātha. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni vinaye sandassiyamānāni sutte ceva osaranti, vinaye ca sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; imassa ca bhikkhuno suggahita’nti. Idaṃ, bhikkhave, paṭhamam mahāpadesam dhāreyyātha.*

‘Idha pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu evaṃ vadeyya — ‘Amukasmim nāma āvāse saṅgho viharati sathero sapāmoḁkko. Tassa me saṅghassa sammukhā suttaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ, ayaṃ dhammo ayaṃ vinayo idaṃ satthusāsana’nti. Tassa, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno bhāsitaṃ neva abhinanditabbaṃ nappaṭikkositabbaṃ. Anabhinanditoṃ appaṭikkositoṃ tāni padabyañjanāni sādhukaṃ uggahetoṃ sutte osāretabbāni, vinaye sandassetabbāni. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni vinaye sandassiyamānāni na ceva sutte osaranti, na ca vinaye sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ na ceva tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; tassa ca saṅghassa duggahita’nti. Itihetaṃ, bhikkhave, chaḍḍeyyātha. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni vinaye sandassiyamānāni sutte ceva osaranti vinaye ca sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; tassa ca saṅghassa suggahita’nti. Idaṃ, bhikkhave, dutiyam mahāpadesam dhāreyyātha.

‘Idha pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu evaṃ vadeyya — ‘Amukasmim nāma āvāse sambahulā therā bhikkhū viharanti bahussutā āgatāgamā dhammadharā vinayadharā mātikādhārā. Tesam me therānam sammukhā suttaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ — ayaṃ dhammo ayaṃ vinayo idaṃ satthusāsana’nti. Tassa, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno

bhāsitaṃ neva abhinanditabbaṃ ... Na ca vinaye sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ na ceva tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; tesañca therānaṃ duggahita’nti. Itihetaṃ, bhikkhave, chaddēyyātha. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni ... Vinaye ca sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; tesañca therānaṃ suggahita’nti. Idaṃ, bhikkhave, tatiyaṃ mahāpadesaṃ dhāreyyātha.

‘Idha pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu evaṃ vadeyya — ‘Amukasmimṃ nāma āvāse eko thero bhikkhu viharati bahussuto āgatāgamo dhammadharo vinayadharo mātikādharo. Tassa me therassa sammukhā suttaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ — ayaṃ dhammo ayaṃ vinayo idaṃ satthusāsana’nti. Tassa, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno bhāsitaṃ neva abhinanditabbaṃ nappaṭikkositabbaṃ. Anabhinanditvā appaṭikkositvā tāni padabyañjanāni sādhukaṃ uggahetvā sutte osāritabbāni, vinaye sandassetabbāni. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni vinaye sandassiyamānāni na ceva sutte osaranti, na ca vinaye sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ na ceva tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; tassa ca therassa duggahita’nti. Itihetaṃ, bhikkhave, chaddēyyātha. Tāni ce sutte osāriyamānāni vinaye sandassiyamānāni sutte ceva osaranti, vinaye ca sandissanti, niṭṭhamettha gantabbaṃ — ‘Addhā, idaṃ tassa Bhagavato vacanaṃ; tassa ca therassa suggahita’nti. Idaṃ, bhikkhave, catutthaṃ mahāpadesaṃ dhāreyyātha. Ime kho, bhikkhave, cattāro mahāpadesa dhāreyyāthā’nti.

Tatrapī sudam Bhagavā bhoganagare viharanto Ānande cetiye etadeva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti — ‘Iti sīlaṃ, iti samādhi, iti paññā. Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisamsa. Samādhiparibhāvito paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisamsā. Paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā’nti.

188. “In the first place, monks, a monk may say thus: ‘From the mouth of the Blessed One himself have I heard, from his own mouth have I learned it. This is the Dhamma, this the discipline, this the doctrine of the teacher.’ The words spoken, monks, by that monk should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood, and compared with the discourses and the rules of discipline. If when so compared they do not harmonise with the discourses, and do not fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, ‘Verily, this is not the word of the Blessed One, and has been wrongly grasped by that monk.’ Therefore, monks, you should reject it. However, if they harmonise with the discourses and fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, ‘Verily, this is the word of the Blessed One, and has been well grasped by that monk.’ This, monks, you should remember as the first great reference.

“Again, monks, a monk may say thus: ‘In such and such a dwelling-place there is a company of monks with elders and leaders of the Saṅgha. From the mouth of that company have I heard, from their own mouths have I learned it. This is the Dhamma, this the discipline, this the doctrine of the teacher.’ The words spoken, monks, by that monk should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood, and compared with the discourses and the rules of discipline. If when so compared they do not harmonise with the discourses, and do not fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, ‘Verily, this is not the word of the Blessed One, and has been wrongly grasped by that monk.’ Therefore, monks, you should reject it. However, if they harmonise with the discourses and fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, ‘Verily, this is the word of the Blessed One, and has been well grasped by that monk.’ This, monks, you should remember as the second great reference.

“Again, monks, a monk may say thus: ‘In such and such a dwelling-place there are dwelling many elders of the Saṅgha deeply read, holding the faith as handed down by tradition, versed in the truths, versed in the regulations of the Saṅgha versed in the summaries of the doctrines and the law. From the mouth of those elders have I heard, from their own mouths have I learned it. This is the Dhamma, this the discipline, this the doctrine of the teacher.’ The words spoken, monks, by that monk should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood, and compared with the discourses and the rules of discipline. If when so compared they do not harmonise with the discourses, and do not fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, ‘Verily, this is not the word of the Blessed One, and has been wrongly grasped by that monk.’ Therefore, monks, you should reject it. However, if they harmonise with the discourses and fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, ‘Verily, this is the word of the Blessed One, and has been well grasped by that monk.’ This, monks, you should remember as the third great reference.

“Again, monks, a monk may say: “In such and such a dwelling-place there lives a monk, deeply read, holding the faith as handed down by tradition, versed in the truths, versed in the regulations of the Saṅgha versed in the summaries of the doctrines and the law. From the mouth of that elder have I heard, from his own mouth have I learned it. This is the Dhamma, this the discipline, this the doctrine of the teacher.’ The words spoken, monks, by

that monk should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood, and compared with the discourses and the rules of discipline. If when so compared they do not harmonise with the discourses, and do not fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, 'Verily, this is not the word of the Blessed One, and has been wrongly grasped by that monk.' Therefore, monks, you should reject it. However, if they harmonise with the discourses and fit in with the rules of discipline, then you may conclude, 'Verily, this is the word of the Blessed One, and has been well grasped by that monk.' This, monks, you should remember as the fourth great reference. "These, monks, are the four great references."

These four great references amply demonstrate the importance of not accepting any teaching due to the status of the person teaching it. A thorough examination should be made to see if it is consistent with other teachings in the Dhamma and Vinaya. This is why monks especially should study the texts as well as practising meditation. The Dhamma is profound and difficult to penetrate. We don't necessarily need to be scholars, but we do need to have that inquiring mind that never accepts things at face value, and we must be willing to abandon our views if they are shown to be erroneous.

Placing too much faith in contemporary teachers, and repeating their teachings without having done any significant study for oneself is a dangerous road to travel. Study, practice, and realisation must be done by oneself. Without personal realisation of the truth, one is still at the mercy of one's views, which may be right or wrong.

There, too, at Bhoganagara the Blessed One gave that comprehensive religious talk to the monks on the nature of morality, concentration, and wisdom. "Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by morality. Great is the fruit, great the benefit of concentration when protected by concentration. The mind protected by wisdom is freed from the corruptions, that is to say, from the corruption of sensuality, from the corruption of becoming, and from the corruption of ignorance."

The Story of Cunda Kammāraputta (*Kammāraputtacundavatthu*)

189. Atha kho Bhagavā bhoganagare yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — "ĀyāmañĀnanda, yena pāvā tēnupasaṅkamissāma"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena pāvā tadavasari. Tatra sudaṃ Bhagavā pāvāyaṃ

viharati cundassa kammāraputtassa ambavane. Assosi kho cundo kammāraputto — “Bhagavā kira pāvam anuppatto, pāvāyaṃ viharati mayhaṃ ambavane”ti. Atha kho cundo kammāraputto yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkhami; upasaṅkhamitvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho cundaṃ kammāraputtaṃ Bhagavā dhammiyā kathāya sandassesi samādapesi samuttejesi sampahaṃsesi. Atha kho cundo kammāraputto Bhagavatā dhammiyā kathāya sandassito samādapito samuttejito sampahaṃsito Bhagavantam etadavoca — “Adhivāsetu me, bhante, Bhagavā svātanāya bhantaṃ saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena”ti. Adhivāsesi Bhagavā tunhībhāvena. Atha kho cundo kammāraputto Bhagavato adhivāsanam viditvā uttāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantam abhivādetvā padakkhiṇam katvā pakkāmi.

Atha kho cundo kammāraputto tassā rattiyā accayena sake nivesane paṇītaṃ khādanīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ paṭiyādāpetvā pahūtaṅca sūkaramaddavaṃ Bhagavato kālam ārocāpesi — “Kālo, bhante, niṭṭhitaṃ bhanta”nti. Atha kho Bhagavā pubbaṅhasamayaṃ nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena yena cundassa kammāraputtassa nivesanaṃ tenupasaṅkhami; upasaṅkhamitvā paṇīatte āsane nisīdi. Nisajja kho Bhagavā cundaṃ kammāraputtaṃ āmantesi — “Yaṃ te, cunda, sūkaramaddavaṃ paṭiyattaṃ, tena maṃ parivisa. Yaṃ panaññaṃ khādanīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ paṭiyattaṃ, tena bhikkhusaṅgham parivisa”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho cundo kammāraputto Bhagavato paṭissutvā yaṃ ahosi sūkaramaddavaṃ paṭiyattaṃ, tena Bhagavantam parivisi. Yaṃ panaññaṃ khādanīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ paṭiyattaṃ, tena bhikkhusaṅgham parivisi. Atha kho Bhagavā cundaṃ kammāraputtaṃ āmantesi — “Yaṃ te, cunda, sūkaramaddavaṃ avasitthaṃ, taṃ sobbhe nikkhaṇāhi. Nāhaṃ taṃ, cunda, passāmi sadevake loke samārake sabrahmake sassamaṇabrāhmaṇiyyā pajāya sadevamanussāya, yassa taṃ paribhuttaṃ sammā pariṇāmaṃ gaccheyya aññātra Tathāgatassā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho cundo kammāraputto Bhagavato paṭissutvā yaṃ ahosi sūkaramaddavaṃ avasitthaṃ, taṃ sobbhe nikkhitvā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkhami; upasaṅkhamitvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho cundaṃ kammāraputtaṃ Bhagavā dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādāpetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā uttāyāsanaṃ pakkāmi.

189. When the Blessed One had remained as long as he wished at Bhoganagara, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Pāvā.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent, and the Blessed One proceeded with a great company of monks to Pāvā.

There at Pāvā the Blessed One stayed at the Mango Grove of Cunda, who was a worker in metals. Cunda heard that the Blessed One had come to Pāvā, and was staying there in his mango grove. Then Cunda went to where the

Blessed One was seated, and after paying homage to him, took a seat respectfully on one side. When he was thus seated, the Blessed One instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened him with religious discourse.

Being instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened by religious discourse, he addressed the Blessed One, saying: “May the Blessed One do me the honour of taking his meal, together with the monks, at my house tomorrow.” The Blessed One signified his consent by silence. Seeing that the Blessed One had consented, Cunda rose from his seat, paid homage to the Blessed One, and keeping him on his right side, he departed.

At the end of the night, Cunda made ready in his dwelling-place delicious hard and soft food, and a quantity of dried boar’s flesh.¹ Then he announced the time to the Blessed One, saying, “The time has come Venerable sir, and the meal is ready.” The Blessed One robed himself early in the morning, and taking his bowl, went with the monks to the dwelling-place of Cunda. When he arrived he sat on the seat prepared for him. Then he addressed Cunda, saying, “The dried boar’s flesh that you have made ready, serve that to me, Cunda; and serve the other delicious hard and soft food to the monks.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” replied Cunda in assent. The dried boar’s flesh he had prepared he served to the Blessed One; and he served the other delicious hard and soft food to the monks.

Then the Blessed One addressed Cunda, saying: “Whatever dried boar’s flesh is left over, bury that in a pit (*sobbhe*). I see no one other than the Tathāgata — neither a Māra, Brahma, deva, recluse, or priest — among gods and men who can digest that food.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said Cunda in assent. Whatever dried boar’s flesh remained over, that he buried in a pit.

Then he went to where the Blessed One was; and when he had come there, took his seat respectfully on one side. When he was seated, the Blessed One instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened Cunda with religious discourse. The Blessed One then rose from his seat and departed.

190. *Atha kho Bhagavato cundassa kammāraputtassa bhantaṃ bhuttāvissa kharo ābādho uppajji, lohitaṃ pakkhandikā pabāḷhā vedanā vattanti māraṇantikā. Tā sudaṃ Bhagavā sato sampajāno adhiṃvāsesi avihaññamāno. Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Āyāmañānanda, yena kusinārā tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi.*

¹ There is some debate about the translation: “Dried boar’s flesh (*sūkaramaddavaṃ*).” Some say it is truffles. The PTS says it is soft tender pork, while Maurice Walshe translates it as Pig’s delight, and provides a long footnote about the word.

*“Cundassa bhantaṃ bhuñjitoā, kammārassāti me suttaṃ.
ābādhaṃ samphusī dhīro, pabālhaṃ māraṇantikaṃ.*

*Bhuttaṃ ca sūkaramaddavena,
byādhippabālho udapādi satthuno.*

*Virecamāno Bhagavā avoca,
Gacchāmahāṃ Kusināraṃ Nagaranti.”*

190. When the Blessed One had eaten the food prepared by Cunda, severe dysentery afflicted him, with sharp pains, even unto death. However, the Blessed One, mindful and clearly comprehending, bore it without complaint. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to Kusinārā.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

“When he had eaten Cunda the smith’s food — thus have I heard,
He bore with fortitude sharp pains even unto death!

From the dried flesh of the boar, as soon as he had eaten it,
There fell upon the teacher sickness dire,

Then after nature was relieved the Blessed One announced
saying: “I am now going to Kusinārā.”

The Bringing of Drinking Water (Pānīyāharaṇaṃ)

191. *Atha kho Bhagavā maggā okkamma yena aññataraṃ rukkhamūlaṃ
tenupasaṅkama; upasaṅkamitoā āyasmantaṃ Ānantaṃ āmantesi — “Tīgha me
tvaṃ, Ānanda, catugguṇaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ pañṇapehi, kilantosmi, Ānanda,
nisīdissāmi”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā
catugguṇaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ pañṇapesi. Nisīdi Bhagavā pañṇatte āsane. Nisajja kho
Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānantaṃ āmantesi — “Tīgha me tvaṃ, Ānanda, pānīyaṃ
āhara, pipāsitosmi, Ānanda, pivissāmi”ti. Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando
Bhagavantaṃ etada voca — “Idāni, bhante, pañcamattāni sakaṭasatāni atikkantāni,
taṃ cakkacchinnāṃ udakaṃ parittaṃ lūlitaṃ āvilaṃ sandati. Ayaṃ, bhante,
kakudhā nadī avidūre acchodakā sātodakā sītodakā setodakā suppatitthā ramaṇīyā.
Ettha Bhagavā pānīyaṃca pivissati, gattāni ca sīti karissati”ti.*

*Dutiyaṃpi kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānantaṃ āmantesi — “Tīgha me tvaṃ,
Ānanda, pānīyaṃ āhara, pipāsitosmi, Ānanda, pivissāmi”ti. Dutiyaṃpi kho
āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etada voca — “Idāni, bhante, pañcamattāni*

sakaṭasatāni atikkantāni, taṃ cakkacchinnaṃ udakaṃ parittaṃ luḷitaṃ āvilaṃ sandati. Ayaṃ, bhante, kakudhā nadī avidūre acchodakā sātodakā sītodakā setodakā suppatitthā ramaṇīyā. Ettha Bhagavā pānīyaṅca pivissati, gattāni ca sitikarissati"ti.

Tatiyampi kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — "Tiṅha me tvaṃ, Ānanda, pānīyaṃ āhara, pipāsitosmi, Ānanda, pivissāmi"ti. "Evaṃ, bhante"ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā pattaṃ gahetvā yena sā nadikā tenupasaṅkami. Atha kho sā nadikā cakkacchinnā parittā luḷitā āvilā sandamānā, āyasmante Ānande upasaṅkamante acchā vipprasannā anāvilā sandittha. Atha kho āyasmato Ānandassa etadahosi — "Acchariyaṃ vata, bho, abbhutaṃ vata, bho, Tathāgatassa mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvātā. Ayaṅhi sā nadikā cakkacchinnā parittā luḷitā āvilā sandamānā mayi upasaṅkamante acchā vipprasannā anāvilā sandati"ti. Pattena pānīyaṃ ādāya yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — "Acchariyaṃ, bhante, abbhutaṃ, bhante, Tathāgatassa mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvātā. Idāni sā bhante nadikā cakkacchinnā parittā luḷitā āvilā sandamānā mayi upasaṅkamante acchā vipprasannā anāvilā sandittha. Pivatu Bhagavā pānīyaṃ pivatu sugato pānīya"nti. Atha kho Bhagavā pānīyaṃ apāyi.

191. The Blessed One went aside from the path to the foot of a certain tree; and when he had come there he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, "Please fold the double-robe¹ (*saṅghāṭi*) in four, Ānanda, and spread it out for me. I am weary, Ānanda, and must rest awhile!"

"Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent, and spread out the double-robe folded in four.

The Blessed One sat on the seat prepared for him, and when seated, addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying: "Please fetch some water, Ānanda. I am thirsty, and wish to drink."

When he had spoken thus, the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "Just now, Venerable sir, about five hundred carts have crossed. The water stirred up by the wheels is shallow and flows muddy and turbid. This river *Kakudhā*, Venerable sir, which is not far off, is clear and pleasant, cool and transparent, easy to get down to, and delightful. There the Blessed One may both drink the water, and cool his limbs."

A second time the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, "Please fetch some water, Ānanda. I am thirsty, and wish to drink."

A second time the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "Just now, Venerable sir, about five hundred carts have crossed. The water stirred up

¹ A monk's set of three robes comprises an under robe wrapped around the waist, a full length upper robe wrapped around the shoulders, and a double-robe — also usually full sized — which may be used as a cloak, a blanket, or a padded seat as in this case.

by the wheels is shallow and flows muddy and turbid. This river Kakudhā, Venerable sir, which is not far off, is clear and pleasant, cool and transparent, easy to get down to, and delightful. There the Blessed One may both drink the water, and cool his limbs."

A third time the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, "Please fetch some water, Ānanda. I am thirsty, and wish to drink."

"Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent; and taking a bowl he went down to the stream. The stream which, stirred up by the wheels, was shallow, and flowing muddy and turbid, when the Venerable Ānanda came near to it, flowed clear and bright and free from all turbidity.

Then Ānanda thought, "How wonderful, how marvellous is the great might and power of the Tathāgata! For this stream which, stirred up by the wheels, was just now shallow and flowing muddy and turbid, as I come near to it, is now flowing clear and bright and free from all turbidity."

Taking water in the bowl he returned to the Blessed One; and when he had come to where the Blessed One was he said to him, "How wonderful, how marvellous is the great might and power of the Tathāgata! For this stream which, stirred up by the wheels, was shallow and flowing muddy and turbid, as I came near to it, flowed clear and bright and free from all turbidity. Let the Blessed One drink the water! Let the Fortunate One drink the water!" Then the Blessed One drank the water.

This incident, like so many others, shows that even a close personal attendant of a senior monk is expected to think for himself, and not to slavishly obey his teacher's every instruction. If a monk ever tells you to do something that you regard as improper or asks for some requisites that are unsuitable for a recluse, such as luxurious goods or cigarettes, don't be afraid to say that you cannot afford them, or ask him whether such goods are allowable if you know or suspect that they are unsuitable requisites for one who claims to be a renunciate.

The Story of Pukkusa Mallaputta (*Pukkusamallaputtavatthu*)

192. Tena rokho pana samayena pukkuso Mallaputto ālārassa kālāmassa sāvako kusinārāya pāvamaṃ addhānamaggappaṭippanno hoti. Addasā kho pukkuso Mallaputto Bhagavantaṃ aññatarasmiṃ rukkhamūle nisinnaṃ. Disvā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho pukkuso Mallaputto Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — "Acchariyaṃ, bhante, abbhutaṃ, bhante, santena vata, bhante, pabbajitā vihārena

viharanti. Bhūtapubbaṃ, bhante, ālāro kālāmo addhānamaggappaṭippaṇṇo maggā okkamma avidūre aññatarasmiṃ rukkhamūle divāvihāraṃ nisīdi. Atha kho, bhante, pañcamattāni sakaṭasatāni ālāraṃ kālāmaṃ nissāya nissāya atikkamiṃsu. Atha kho, bhante, aññataro puriso tassa sakaṭasatthassa piṭṭhito piṭṭhito āgacchanto yena ālāro kālāmo tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā ālāraṃ kālāmaṃ etadavoca — ‘Api, bhante, pañcamattāni sakaṭasatāni atikkantāni addasā’ti? ‘Na kho ahaṃ, āvuso, addasa’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, saddaṃ assosī’ti? ‘Na kho ahaṃ, āvuso, saddaṃ assosī’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, sutto ahosī’ti? ‘Na kho ahaṃ, āvuso, sutto ahosī’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, saññī ahosī’ti? ‘Evamāvuso’ti. ‘So tvaṃ, bhante, saññī samāno jāgāro pañcamattāni sakaṭasatāni nissāya nissāya atikkantāni neva addasa, na pana saddaṃ assosi; apisu te, bhante, saṅghāṭi rajena okiṇṇā’ti? ‘Evamāvuso’ti. Atha kho, bhante, tassa purisassa etadahosi — ‘Acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho, santena vata bho pabbajitā vihārena viharanti. Yatra hi nāma saññī samāno jāgāro pañcamattāni sakaṭasatāni nissāya nissāya atikkantāni neva dakkhati, na pana saddaṃ sossatī’ti! ālāre kālāme ulāraṃ pasādaṃ pavedetvā pakkāmi’ti.

192. Now at that time a man named Pukkusa, a young Mallian, a disciple of Ālāra Kālāma, was passing along the high road from Kusinārā to Pāvā. Pukkusa, the young Mallian, saw the Blessed One seated at the foot of a tree. On seeing him, he went up to the Blessed One, greeted him, and sat respectfully on one side. When he was seated, Pukkusa the young Mallian, said to the Blessed One, “How wonderful it is, Venerable sir, and how marvellous, that those who have gone forth should pass their time in a state of mind so calm! At one time, Venerable sir, Ālāra Kālāma was walking along the high road; and leaving the road he sat himself down under a certain tree to rest during the heat of the day. Then, Venerable sir, five hundred carts passed by one after the other, each close to Ālāra Kālāma. A certain man, who was following close behind that caravan, went up to Ālāra Kālāma, and said to Ālāra Kālāma:—

“Venerable sir, did you see those five hundred carts go by?”

“No, indeed, sir, I did not.”

“Venerable sir, did you hear them?”

“No, indeed, sir, I did not.”

“Venerable sir, were you then asleep?”

“No, sir, I was not asleep.”

“Venerable sir, were you then conscious?”

“Yes sir, I was conscious.”

“So, Venerable sir, though you were both conscious and awake, but neither saw nor heard the five hundred carts passing by, one after the other, and

each close to you. Why, Venerable sir, even your robe was sprinkled over with the dust raised by them!”

“It is as you say, sir.”

“Then that man thought: ‘How wonderful it is, how marvellous, that those who have gone forth should pass their time in a state of mind so calm! So much so that though being conscious and awake, neither sees nor hears five hundred carts passing by, one after the other, and each close to him,’ and after expressing his deep faith in Āḷāra Kālāma, he departed.”

193. *“Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, pukkusa, katamaṃ nu kho dukkarataraṃ vā durabhisambhavataraṃ vā — yo vā saññī samāno jāgaro pañcamattāni sakaṭasatāni nissāya nissāya atikkantāni neva passeyya, na pana saddaṃ suṇeyya; yo vā saññī samāno jāgaro deve vassante deve gaḷaḷaḷāyante vijjullatāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā neva passeyya, na pana saddaṃ suṇeyyā”ti? “Kiñhi, bhante, karissanti pañca vā sakaṭasatāni cha vā sakaṭasatāni satta vā sakaṭasatāni aṭṭha vā sakaṭasatāni nava vā sakaṭasatāni, sakaṭasahassaṃ vā sakaṭasatasahassaṃ vā. Atha kho etadeva dukkarataraṃ ceva durabhisambhavatarañca yo saññī samāno jāgaro deve vassante deve gaḷaḷaḷāyante vijjullatāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā neva passeyya, na pana saddaṃ suṇeyyā”ti.*

“Ekamidāhaṃ, pukkusa, samayaṃ ātumāyaṃ viharāmi bhusāgāre. Tena kho pana samayena deve vassante deve gaḷaḷaḷāyante vijjullatāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā avidūre bhusāgārassa dve kassakā bhātaro hatā cattāro ca balibaddā. Atha kho, pukkusa, ātumāya mahājanakāyo nikkhamitvā yena te dve kassakā bhātaro hatā cattāro ca balibaddā tenupasaṅkami. Tena kho panāhaṃ, pukkusa, samayena bhusāgārā nikkhamitvā bhusāgāradvāre abbhokāse caṅkamāmi. Atha kho, pukkusa, aññītaro puriso tamhā mahājanakāyā yenāhaṃ tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā maṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi. Ekamantaṃ ṭhitāṃ kho ahaṃ, pukkusa, taṃ purisaṃ etadavocaṃ — ‘Kiṃ nu kho eso, āvuso, mahājanakāyo sannipatito’ti? ‘Idāni, bhante, deve vassante deve gaḷaḷaḷāyante vijjullatāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā dve kassakā bhātaro hatā cattāro ca balibaddā. Ettheso mahājanakāyo sannipatito. Tvaṃ pana, bhante, kva ahoṣī’ti? ‘Idheva kho ahaṃ, āvuso, ahoṣī’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, addasā’ti? ‘Na kho ahaṃ, āvuso, addasa’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, saddaṃ assosī’ti? ‘Na kho ahaṃ, āvuso, saddaṃ assosī’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, sutto ahoṣī’ti? ‘Na kho ahaṃ, āvuso, sutto ahoṣī’nti. ‘Kiṃ pana, bhante, saññī ahoṣī’ti? ‘Evamāvuso’ti. ‘So tvaṃ, bhante, saññī samāno jāgaro deve vassante deve gaḷaḷaḷāyante vijjullatāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā neva addasa, na pana saddaṃ assosī’ti? ‘Evamāvuso”ti?”

“Atha kho, pukkusa, purisassa etadahosi — ‘Acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho, santena vata bho pabbajitā vihārena viharanti. Yatra hi nāma saññī

samāno jāgaro deve vassante deve gaḷagaḷāyante vijjullatāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā neva dakkhati, na pana saddaṃ sossatī'ti. Mayi ulāraṃ pasādaṃ pavedetvā maṃ abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā pakkāmi'ti.

Evam vutte pukkuso Mallaputto Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Esāhaṃ, bhante, yo me ālāre kālāme pasādo taṃ mahāvāte vā ophuṇāmi sīghasotāya vā nadiyā pavāhemi. Abhikkantaṃ, bhante, abhikkantaṃ, bhante! seyyathāpi, bhante, nikkujjitaṃ vā ukkujjeyya, paṭicchannaṃ vā vivareyya, mūḷhassa vā maggaṃ ācikkheyya, andhakāre vā telapajjotaṃ dhāreyya ‘Cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhanti’ti; evamevaṃ Bhagavatā anekapariyāyena dhammo pakāsito. Esāhaṃ, bhante, Bhagavantaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi dhammañca bhikkhusaṅghañca. Upāsakaṃ maṃ Bhagavā dhāretu ajjatagge pānupetaṃ saraṇaṃ gata’nti.

193. “What do you think, Pukkusa, which is the more difficult thing to do or more rare — that a man being conscious and awake should neither see nor hear five hundred carts passing by, one after the other, close to him — or that a man, being conscious and awake, should neither see, nor hear the sound when torrential rain beats and splashes, lightning flashes, and thunder crashes?”

“What in comparison, Venerable sir, can these five hundred carts do, or six, seven, eight, nine hundred, or even thousands of carts. That certainly is more difficult to do and more rare, that a man being conscious and awake should neither see nor hear the sound when torrential rain beats and splashes, lightning flashes, and thunder crashes.”

“On one occasion, Pukkusa, I was dwelling at *Ātumā*, at the threshing-house. At that time torrential rain began to beat and splash, and lightning flashed, and thunder crashed; and two brothers who were farmers and four oxen were killed. Then, Pukkusa, a crowd of people from *Ātumā* went to the place where the two brothers and the four oxen, lay dead.

“At that time, Pukkusa, I had gone out from the threshing-house, and was walking up and down in the open. A certain man, Pukkusa, from that crowd of people approached me, paid homage to me, and stood respectfully on one side. As he stood there, Pukkusa, I said to the man: “Why, friend, has this crowd of people assembled?”

“Just now, Venerable sir, the torrential rain began to beat and splash, the lightning flashed, thunder crashed; and two brothers who were farmers were killed and four oxen. Therefore, this crowd has gathered. Where, Venerable sir, were you?”

“I, friend, have been here all the while.”

“Venerable sir, did you see it?”

“I, friend, I saw nothing.”

“Venerable sir, did you hear it?”

“I, sir, heard nothing.”

“Were you then, Venerable sir, asleep?”

“I, friend, was not asleep.”

“Were you then conscious, Venerable sir?”

“I was, friend.”

“So, Venerable sir, being conscious and awake, neither saw, nor heard the torrential rain beating and splashing, lightning flashing, and thunder crashing.”

“That is so, friend.”

“Then, Pukkusa, this thought occurred to him, ‘How wonderful it is, and marvellous, that those gone forth should pass their time in a state of mind so calm that though conscious and awake they neither see nor hear torrential rain beating and splashing, and lightning flashing, and thunder crashing.’ After expressing his deep faith in me, and paying homage, he departed.”

When this had been said, Pukkusa addressed the Blessed One thus, “Venerable sir, as to the faith that I had in Āḷāra Kālāma, that winnows away as in a mighty wind, and washes away as in a swiftly flowing stream. Most excellent, Venerable sir, are your words, most excellent! Just as if a man were to set upright that which has been overturned, or reveal that which is hidden, or point out the right path to one who has gone astray, or bring a lamp into the darkness so that those who have eyes can see — Yes, Venerable sir, has the truth been made known in many ways, by the Blessed One. I go to the Blessed One as my refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha. May the Blessed One accept me as a disciple from this day forth, as long as I may live!”

Āḷāra Kālāma was one of the two teachers who taught tranquillity meditation to the Bodhisatta prior to his Enlightenment (the other being *Udaka Rāmaputta*). He was a genuine recluse who was an adept in deep states of absorption (*jhāna*). The Bodhisatta mastered these absorptions, but they did not lead to the cessation of suffering, so he abandoned them to seek another path. After attaining Buddhahood he was able to abide in a state called *Nirodha Samāpatti* for periods of up to seven days and nights, enjoying the perfect bliss of nibbāna. Āḷāra Kālāma, who was still an ordinary person (*puthujjana*), had no experience of this state. Nothing can disturb this concentration.

194. *Atha kho pukkuso Mallaputto aññataramaṃ purisaṃ āmantesi — “Iṅha me tvam, bhane, siṅgīvaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ dhāraṇīyaṃ āharā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho so puriso pukkusassa Mallaputtassa paṭissutoā taṃ siṅgīvaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ dhāraṇīyaṃ āhari. Atha kho pukkuso Mallaputto taṃ siṅgīvaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ*

dhāraṇīyaṃ Bhagavato upanāmesi — “Idaṃ, bhante, siṅgivaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ dhāraṇīyaṃ, taṃ me Bhagavā paṭiggaṇhātu anukampaṃ upādāyā”ti. “Tena hi, pukkusa, ekena maṃ acchādehi, ekena Ānanda”nti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho pukkuso Mallaputto Bhagavato paṭissutvā ekena Bhagavantaṃ acchādeti, ekena āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ. Atha kho Bhagavā pukkusaṃ Mallaputtaṃ dhammiyā kathāya sandassesi samādapesi samuttejesi sampahaṃsesi. Atha kho pukkuso Mallaputto Bhagavatā dhammiyā kathāya sandassito samādapito samuttejito sampahaṃsito utthāyāsanaṃ Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā pakkāmi.

194. Then Pukkusa addressed a certain man, saying: “Fetch me a pair of robes of gold-coloured (*siṅgivaṇṇaṃ*) cloth, ready to wear.”

“Even so, sir,” said that man in assent; and he brought a pair of robes of golden cloth, ready to wear. Pukkusa presented the pair of robes of golden cloth, ready to wear, to the Blessed One, saying, “Venerable sir, this pair of robes of gold-coloured cloth is ready to wear. May the Blessed One accept them out of compassion!”

“In that case, Pukkusa, robe me in one, and Ānanda in the other.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” said Pukkusa, in assent; and he robed the Blessed One in one, and Venerable Ānanda in the other.

Then the Blessed One instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened Pukkusa with religious discourse, and Pukkusa, when he had been instructed, roused, enthused, and gladdened by the Blessed One with religious discourse, rose from his seat, paid homage to the Blessed One; and keeping him on his right, he departed.

The Pāli word “*acchādehi*” means to dress or clothe. It seems improbable that Pukkusa would actually put the robes on the Blessed One and the Venerable Ānanda, so I assume that this is idiomatic. It seems from the following paragraph too, that it was the Venerable Ānanda who actually dressed the Blessed One in the golden robe.

195. *Atha kho āyasmā Ānando acirapakkante pukkuse Mallaputte taṃ siṅgivaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ dhāraṇīyaṃ Bhagavato kāyaṃ upanāmesi. Taṃ Bhagavato kāyaṃ upanāmitaṃ hataccikaṃ viya khāyati. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Acchariyaṃ, bhante, abbhutaṃ, bhante, yāva parisuddho, bhante, Tathāgatassa chavivaṇṇo pariyodāto. Idaṃ, bhante, siṅgivaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ dhāraṇīyaṃ Bhagavato kāyaṃ upanāmitaṃ hataccikaṃ viya khāyati”ti. “Evametam, Ānanda, evametam, Ānanda dvīsu kālesu ativiya Tathāgatassa kāyo parisuddho hoti chavivaṇṇo pariyodāto. Katamesu dvīsu? Yañca, Ānanda, rattim Tathāgato anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambujjhati, yañca rattim anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbāyati. Imesu kho, Ānanda,*

dvīsu kālesu ativiya Tathāgatassa kāyo parisuddho hoti chavivaṇṇo pariyodāto. ‘Ajja kho, pan’Ānanda, rattiyā pacchime yāme kusiṇārāyaṃ upavattane mallānaṃ sālavana antarena yamaśālānaṃ Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. ĀyāmaṃĀnanda, yena kakudhā nadī tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi.

*“Siṅgivaṇṇaṃ yugamaṭṭhaṃ, pukkuso abhihārayi.
Tena acchādito saṭṭhā, hemavaṇṇo asobhathāti.”*

195. Not long after Pukkusa had departed, Ānanda arranged that pair of robes of gold-coloured cloth, ready to wear on the Blessed One’s body, and when it was on the Blessed One’s body it appeared to have lost its splendour! The Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “How wonderful, Venerable sir, and how marvellous, that the skin of the Blessed One should be so clear, so exceeding bright! When I arranged this pair of robes of gold-coloured cloth, ready to wear on the Blessed One’s body it has lost its splendour!”

“It is so, Ānanda. There are two occasions, Ānanda, on which the skin of a Tathāgata becomes exceeding clear and bright. What are the two? On the night, Ānanda, on which a Tathāgata attains to the supreme and perfect Enlightenment, and on the night when he passes away in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain; on these two occasions the skin of the Tathāgata becomes exceeding clear and bright.”

Today, Ānanda, in the third watch of the night, in the Sal Grove of the Mallians at Kusiṇārā, between the twin Sal trees, the final passing away of the Tathāgata will take place. Come, Ānanda! Let us go to the river Kakudhā.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

*“The pair of robes of golden cloth,
Ready to wear, Pukkusa had brought,
Clad with them, the Master then
Shone forth in colour like gold!”*

196. *Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena kakudhā nadī tenupasaṅkami ; upasaṅkamitoā kakudhaṃ nadīṃ ajjhogāhetvā nhatvā ca pivitoā ca paccuttaritoā yena ambavanaṃ tenupasaṅkami. Upasaṅkamitoā āyasmantaṃ cundakaṃ āmantesi — “Iṅha me tovaṃ, cundaka, catugguṇaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ paññapehi, kilantosmi, cundaka, nipajjissāmi”ti.*

“Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā cundako Bhagavato paṭissutoā catugguṇaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ paññapesi. Atha kho Bhagavā dakkhiṇena passena sihaseyyaṃ kappesi

*pāde pādaṃ accādhāya sato sampajāno uttānasaññaṃ manasikaritoā. Āyasmā
pana cundako tattheva Bhagavato purato nisīdi.*

*“Gantvāna buddho nadikaṃ kakudhaṃ,
Acchodakaṃ sātudakaṃ vipassannaṃ.*

*Ogāhi satthā akilantarūpo,
Tathāgato appaṭimo ca loke.*

*Nhatvā ca pivitvā cudatāri satthā,
Purakkhato bhikkhugaṇassa majjhe.*

*Vattā pavattā Bhagavā idha dhamme,
Upāgami ambavanaṃ mahesi.*

*Āmantayi cundakaṃ nāma bhikkhuṃ,
Catugguṇaṃ santhara me nipajjaṃ.*

*So codito bhāvitattena cundo,
Catugguṇaṃ santhari khippameva.*

*Nipajji satthā akilantarūpo,
Cundopi tattha pamukhe nisīdī.”*

196. Then the Blessed One with a great company of monks went on to the river Kakudhā; and on arriving there, he went down into the river, bathed, and drank. Then, on coming up out on the other side he went on to the Mango Grove. When he came there he addressed the Venerable Cundaka, saying, “Fold the double-robe in four and spread it out. I am weary, Cundaka, and would rest.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Cundaka replied in assent, and folding the double-robe in four, he spread it out. The Blessed One laid himself down on his right side, with one foot resting on the other; mindful and clearly comprehending, with the perception of rising again after a while. The Venerable Cundaka sat in front of the Blessed One.

*“The Buddha came to Kakudhā’s river,
Whose clear and pleasant waters limpid flow,
He plunged beneath the stream wearied and worn,
The Buddha without equal in the world!*

*When he had bathed and drunk, the teacher then
Crossed o’er, the monks thronging round his steps;
The Blessed Master, teaching the while the truth,
The Mighty Sage came to the Mango Grove.*

There he spoke to the monk Cundaka,
 ‘Spread me the fourfold robe out as a couch.’
 Cheered by the Holy One, he quickly spread
 The fourfold robe in order on the ground.

The Master laid himself down, wearied and worn;
 There, before him, Cunda took his seat.”

197. *Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Siyā kho, paṇānanda, cundassa kammāraputtassa koci vippaṭṭisāraṃ uppādeyya — ‘Tassa te, āvuso cunda, alābhā tassa te dulladdhaṃ, yassa te Tathāgato pacchimaṃ piṇḍapātaṃ paribhuñjitvā parinibbuto’ti. Cundassa, Ānanda, kammāraputtassa evaṃ vippaṭṭisāro paṭivinetabbo — ‘Tassa te, āvuso cunda, lābhā tassa te suladdhaṃ, yassa te Tathāgato pacchimaṃ piṇḍapātaṃ paribhuñjitvā parinibbuto. Sammukhā metaṃ, āvuso cunda, Bhagavato suttaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ — dve me piṇḍapātā samasamaphalā samavipākā, atīviya aññehi piṇḍapātehi mahapphalatarā ca mahānisamsatarā ca. Katame dve? Yañca piṇḍapātaṃ paribhuñjitvā Tathāgato anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambujjhati, yañca piṇḍapātaṃ paribhuñjitvā Tathāgato anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbāyati. Ime dve piṇḍapātā samasamaphalā samavipākā, atīviya aññehi piṇḍapātehi mahapphalatarā ca mahānisamsatarā ca. Āyusaṃvattanikaṃ āyasmatā cundena kammāraputtena kammaṃ upacitaṃ, vaṇṇasaṃvattanikaṃ āyasmatā cundena kammāraputtena kammaṃ upacitaṃ, sukhasaṃvattanikaṃ āyasmatā cundena kammāraputtena kammaṃ upacitaṃ, yasasaṃvattanikaṃ āyasmatā cundena kammāraputtena kammaṃ upacitaṃ, saggasaṃvattanikaṃ āyasmatā cundena kammāraputtena kammaṃ upacitaṃ, ādhipateyyasaṃvattanikaṃ āyasmatā cundena kammāraputtena kammaṃ upacita’nti. Cundassa, Ānanda, kammāraputtassa evaṃ vippaṭṭisāro paṭivinetabbo’”ti. Atha kho Bhagavā etamatthaṃ viditvā tāyaṃ velāyaṃ imaṃ udānaṃ udānesi —*

“*Dadato puññaṃ pavaddhati,
 saṃyamato veraṃ na cīyati.
 Kusalo ca jahāti pāpakaṃ,
 rāgadosamohakkhayā sanibbuto’”ti.*

Catuttho Bhāṇavāro

197. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “It may happen, Ānanda, that someone should stir up remorse in Cunda the smith, saying, ‘This is a loss for you, Cunda, and a calamity in that when the Tathāgata had eaten his last meal, from you, he died.’ Any such remorse, Ānanda, in Cunda the smith, should be checked by saying, ‘This is a gain

for you, Cunda, and blessing for you, in that when the Tathāgata had eaten his last meal, from you, then he died. From the mouth of the Blessed One, Cunda, have I heard it said, “These two offerings of food are of equal fruit, of equal result, and of much greater fruit and much greater benefit than any other. What are the two? The offering of food which, when a Tathāgata has eaten, he attains to supreme and perfect Enlightenment; and the offering of food which, when a Tathāgata has eaten, he passes away by that utter passing away in which nothing whatever remains behind — these two offerings of food are of equal fruit and of equal result, and of much greater fruit and much greater benefit than any others. There has been laid up by Cunda the smith a karma leading to long life, leading to good birth, resulting in good fortune, resulting in good fame, resulting in the inheritance of heaven, and of sovereign power.” In this way, Ānanda, should be checked any remorse in Cunda the smith.” Then the Blessed One perceiving how the matter stood, uttered this verse:

“To him who gives shall virtue be increased;
 In him who curbs himself, no anger can arise;
 The righteous man casts off all sinfulness,
 By the rooting out of lust and bitterness, and
 All delusion, does attain nibbāna!”

End of the Fourth Portion for Recitation

The Twin Sal Trees (Yamakasālā)

198. *Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “ĀyāmañĀnanda, yena hiraññavatiyā nadiyā pārimaṃ tīraṃ, yena kusinārā upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sālavanaṃ tenupasaṅkamissāmā”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Bhagavā mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena hiraññavatiyā nadiyā pārimaṃ tīraṃ, yena kusinārā upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sālavanaṃ tenupasaṅkami. Upasaṅkamitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Iṅgha me tovaṃ, Ānanda, antarena yamakasālānaṃ uttarasīsakam mañcakaṃ paññapehi, kilantosmi, Ānanda, nipajjissāmī”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā antarena yamakasālānaṃ uttarasīsakam mañcakaṃ paññapesi. Atha kho Bhagavā dakkhiṇena passena sīhaseyyaṃ kappesi pāde pādaṃ accādhāya sato sampajāno.*

Tena kho pana samayena yamakasālā sabbaphāliphullā honti akālapupphēhi. Te Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi mandāravapupphāni antalikkhā papatanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi candanacuṇṇāni antalikkhā papatanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi tūriyāni antalikkhe vajjanti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi saṅgītāni antalikkhe vattanti Tathāgatassa pūjāya.

198. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Come, Ānanda, let us go on to the Sal Grove of the Mallas at Kusinārā, on the other side of the river *Hiraññavati*.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

The Blessed One proceeded with a great company of monks to the Sal Grove of the Mallas at Kusinārā, on the other side of the river *Hiraññavati*, and on arriving there he addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Spread for me, Ānanda, a bed facing north, between the twin Sal trees. I am weary, Ānanda, and will lie down.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent, and he spread a bed between the twin Sal trees, facing north. The Blessed One lay down on his right side, with one foot resting on the other; mindful and clearly comprehending.

At that time the twin Sal trees were all one mass of bloom with flowers out of season; and all over the body of the Tathāgata these dropped and sprinkled and scattered themselves, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. Heavenly mandārava flowers and sandalwood powder came falling from the sky, sprinkling the body of the Tathāgata out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. Heavenly music was heard in the sky, and heavenly songs wafted down from the skies, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old!

The normal season for *Sal trees* to flower is in May to June, so it is significant that the text mentions here that they flowered out of season (*akālapupphēhi*). This fits with the aforementioned time of the Parinibbāna being in January, not May.

199. *Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Sabbaphāliphullā kho, Ānanda, yamakasālā akālapupphēhi. Te Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi mandāravapupphāni antalikkhā papatanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi candanacuṇṇāni antalikkhā papatanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi tūriyāni*

antalikkhe vajjanti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbānīpi saṅgītāni antalikkhe vattanti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Na kho, Ānanda, ettāvata Tathāgato sakkato vā hoti garukato vā mānito vā pūjito vā apacito vā. Yo kho, Ānanda, bhikkhu vā bhikkhunī vā upāsako vā upāsikā vā dhammānudhammappaṭipanno viharati sāmīcippaṭipanno anudhammacārī, so Tathāgataṃ sakkaroti garuṃ karoti māneti pūjeti apaciyati, paramāya pūjāya. Tasmātiĥ Ānanda, dhammānudhammappaṭipannā viharissāma sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacārīnoti. Evañhi vo, Ānanda, sikkhitabba”nti.

199. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “The twin Sal trees are all one mass of bloom with flowers out of season; all over the body of the Tathāgata these drop and sprinkle and scatter themselves, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. Heavenly mandārava flowers, too, and heavenly sandalwood powder come falling from the sky, and all over the body of the Tathāgata they descend and sprinkle and scatter themselves, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. Heavenly music sounds in the sky, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old, and heavenly songs come wafted from the skies, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old! It is not thus, Ānanda, that the Tathāgata is rightly respected, revered, honoured, venerated, or worshipped. However, a monk or nun, a male or female disciple, who fulfils the greater and lesser duties, who practises correctly, living in accordance with the Dhamma, rightly respects, reveres, honours, venerates, and worships the Tathāgata with the highest reverence. Therefore, Ānanda, be constant in fulfilling the greater and lesser duties, practising correctly, live in accordance with the Dhamma. Thus, Ānanda, should it be taught.”

*This is an important point to be noted by all Buddhists. The Buddha says specifically, that not only monks and nuns, but also male and female lay disciples who practise correctly, living in accordance with the Dhamma, fulfilling their duties, rightly respect, honour, venerate, and revere the Tathāgata. Thus, it is not only those gone forth who should meditate, and strive to realise the Dhamma, but also householders. Mere devotional practices such as offering flowers, incense, and other gifts to shrines, or offering alms to monks and nuns, are not the highest homage. What the Buddha stresses here is the importance of paying homage by practice (*paṭipatti pūjā*).*

Householders and monastics have different duties and different precepts to observe. Householders have a religious duty to support the Saṅgha by providing their material needs, and monastics have a duty to be easily supportable, reflecting wisely when using the requisites offered by those with faith in the teaching. They have a duty to cultivate insight (*vipassanā-dhura*), and to preserve and propagate the Buddha's

teachings (*ganthā-dhura*). Householders should observe the five precepts, or the eight precepts on Uposatha days whenever possible. Monks should observe the 227 Pātimokkha precepts, and novices should observe the ten precepts. Modern nuns usually observe the eight precepts, but there are 311 Bhikkhūṇī precepts to be observed for nuns with the higher ordination.

Practising in accordance with the Dhamma, for both householders and monastics, means to cultivate morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). The three types of spiritual training are not like the rungs of a ladder, with morality being the first step that must be fulfilled before one can ascend to the second step of concentration, and thence on to the third step of wisdom. Rather, they are like the three legs of a tripod. Morality provides support to concentration and wisdom; concentration provides support to morality and wisdom; and wisdom provides support to morality and concentration. Therefore, even a Buddhist fisherman or farmer who is, as yet, unable to properly fulfil the five precepts, should be encouraged to cultivate concentration and insight. Gradually, as wisdom develops, morality is purified, and with the non-remorse that comes from not breaking the precepts, mental serenity and concentration develop.

It is the same for monastics too. Nowadays, there are many who are unable to fulfil even the ten precepts by abstaining from using money. Even Ajahn Chah accepted money when he was a young monk. Later, he studied the Vinaya and realised that it was not allowable for monks. He gave it up, and went to learn meditation from forest monks, gradually attaining wisdom and becoming a famous teacher.

The Buddha's teaching is realistic. Apart from a few rare exceptions from the time of the Buddha, nobody is already perfect when they join the Saṅgha, and most remain imperfect for their entire life. However, if the training is followed properly, morality, concentration, and wisdom will develop, and in this way a disciple rightly respects, honours, venerates, and reveres the Tathāgata by practising in accordance with the Dhamma to remove his or her imperfections.

Building pagodas, planting Bodhi trees, making offerings to shrines may be done if it makes the mind peaceful and focuses attention on the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha — there is no harm in performing these traditional religious practices. However, they are not the best homage to the Buddha. It is like preparing delicious food, but not eating it oneself. The purpose of food is to provide strength, and that can only be effective if one eats it. The truth of suffering must be understood, the cause of suffering (craving) must be abandoned, the cessation of suffering (nibbāna) must be realised, and the path to the cessation of suffering (the eightfold path) must be developed.

The Venerable Upavāṇa (Upavāṇatthero)

200. Tena kho pana samayena āyasmā upavāṇo Bhagavato purato ṭhito hoti Bhagavantam bijayamāno. Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ upavāṇaṃ apasāresi — “Apehi, bhikkhu, mā me purato atṭhāsī”ti. Atha kho āyasmato Ānandassa etadahosi — “Ayaṃ kho āyasmā upavāṇo dīgharattaṃ Bhagavato upaṭṭhāko santikāvacarō samīpacārī. Atha ca pana Bhagavā pacchime kāle āyasmantaṃ upavāṇaṃ apasāreti — ‘Apehi bhikkhu, mā me purato atṭhāsī’ti. Ko nu kho hetu, ko paccayo, yaṃ Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ upavāṇaṃ apasāreti — ‘Apehi, bhikkhu, mā me purato atṭhāsī’ti? Atha kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etadavoca — ‘Ayaṃ, bhante, āyasmā upavāṇo dīgharattaṃ Bhagavato upaṭṭhāko santikāvacarō samīpacārī. Atha ca pana Bhagavā pacchime kāle āyasmantaṃ upavāṇaṃ apasāreti — ‘Apehi, bhikkhu, mā me purato atṭhāsī’ti. Ko nu kho, bhante, hetu, ko paccayo, yaṃ Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ upavāṇaṃ apasāreti — ‘Apehi, bhikkhu, mā me purato atṭhāsī’ti? ‘Yebhuyyena, Ānanda, dasasu lokadhātūsu devatā sannipatitā Tathāgataṃ dassanāya. Yāvata, Ānanda, kusinārā upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sāvānaṃ samantato dvādasa yojanāni, natthi so padeso vālaggakoṭinitudanamattopi mahesakkhāni devatāhi apphuṭo. Devatā, Ānanda, ujjhāyanti — ‘Dūrā ca vatamha āgatā Tathāgataṃ dassanāya. Kadāci karahaci Tathāgatā loke uppajjanti arahanto sammāsambuddhā. Ajjeva rattiyā pacchime yāme Tathāgataṃ parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Ayaṅca mahesakkho bhikkhu Bhagavato purato ṭhito ovārento, na mayaṃ labhāma pacchime kāle Tathāgataṃ dassanāyā’”ti.

200. At that time the Venerable Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Blessed One, fanning him. The Blessed One told Upavāṇa to move,¹ saying, ‘Stand aside, monk, do not stand in front of me.’

Then this thought occurred to the Venerable Ānanda, ‘The Venerable Upavāṇa has long been in close personal attendance, serving the Blessed One. At the last moment, the Blessed One orders him to move, saying, ‘Stand aside, monk, do not stand front of me.’ What is the cause, what is the reason, that the Blessed One speaks thus to him?’ So the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “The Venerable Upavāṇa has long been in close personal attendance, serving the Blessed One. At the last moment, the Blessed One orders him to move, saying, ‘Stand aside, monk, do not stand front of me.’ What is the cause, what is the reason, that the Blessed One speaks thus to him?”

¹ Rhys Davids, translates “Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ upavāṇaṃ apasāresi” as “was displeased with Upavāṇa.” Perhaps he reads it as “apasādeti,” to blame?

“In great numbers, Ānanda, the gods of the ten world-systems have assembled to see the Tathāgata. For twelve leagues, Ānanda, around the Sal Grove of the Mallas at Kusinārā, there is no spot even as big as a hair tip that is not pervaded by powerful deities. The deities, Ānanda, are complaining, and say, ‘We have come from afar to see the Tathāgata. Rarely do the Tathāgatas, the Worthy, Fully Enlightened Buddhas appear in the world. Today, in the last watch of the night, the final passing away of the Tathāgata will take place, but this eminent monk stands in front of the Tathāgata, concealing him, and in his last hour we are prevented from seeing the Tathāgata;’ thus, Ānanda, do the deities complain.”

201. *“Kathamhūtā pana, bhante, Bhagavā devatā manasikarotī”ti? “Sant’Ānanda, devatā ākāse pathavīsaññīniyo kese pakiriya kandanti, bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvaṭṭanti, vivaṭṭanti — ‘Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbāyissati, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbāyissati, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antaradhṃāyissati’ti.*

“Sant’Ānanda, devatā pathaviyaṃ pathavīsaññīniyo kese pakiriya kandanti, bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvaṭṭanti, vivaṭṭanti — ‘Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbāyissati, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbāyissati, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antaradhāyissati’”ti.

“Yā pana tā devatā vītarāgā, tā satā sampajānā adhivāseṇti — ‘Aniccā saṅkhārā, taṃ kutettha labbhā’ti.

201. “To what kind of deities is the Blessed One referring?”

“There are, Ānanda, deities in the sky, but of worldly mind, who tear their hair, stretch forth their arms and weep, who fall prostrate on the ground, and roll to and fro in anguish at the thought, ‘Too soon will the Blessed One die! Too soon will the Fortunate One pass away! Too soon will the eye of the world disappear!’ There are also, Ānanda, deities on the earth, and of worldly mind who tear their hair, stretch forth their arms and weep, who fall prostrate on the ground, and roll to and fro in anguish at the thought, ‘Too soon will the Blessed One die! Too soon will the Happy One pass away! Too soon will the eye of the world disappear!’ However, those deities who are free from passion bear it calmly, clearly comprehending and mindful that all compounded things are impermanent, how could this be otherwise!”

Even the gods are mostly not free from sorrow, lamentation, grief, and despair because they are not free from sensual desire and craving. Some deities are wise, some are not. Some are Noble Ones, some are still ordinary persons.

The Four Places that Arouse Devotion (*Catusaṃvejanīyaṭṭhānāni*)

202. “Pubbe, bhante, disāsu vassaṃ vuṭṭhā bhikkhū āgacchanti Tathāgataṃ dassanāya. Te mayaṃ labhāma manobhāvanīye bhikkhū dassanāya, labhāma payirupāsānāya. Bhagavato pana mayaṃ, bhante, accayena na labhissāma manobhāvanīye bhikkhū dassanāya, na labhissāma payirupāsānāya”ti.

“Cattārimāni, Ānanda, saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyāni sṃvejanīyāni ṭhānāni. Katamāni cattāri? ‘Idha Tathāgato jāto’ti, Ānanda, saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ sṃvejanīyaṃ ṭhānaṃ. ‘Idha Tathāgato anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddho’ti, Ānanda, saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ sṃvejanīyaṃ ṭhānaṃ. ‘Idha Tathāgatena anuttaraṃ dhammacakkaṃ pavattita’nti, Ānanda, saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ sṃvejanīyaṃ ṭhānaṃ. ‘Idha Tathāgato anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbuto’ti, Ānanda, saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ sṃvejanīyaṃ ṭhānaṃ. Imāni kho, Ānanda, cattāri saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyāni sṃvejanīyāni ṭhānāni.

“Āgamissanti kho, Ānanda, saddhā bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo — ‘Idha Tathāgato jāto’tipi, ‘Idha Tathāgato anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddho’tipi, ‘Idha Tathāgatena anuttaraṃ dhammacakkaṃ pavattita’ntipi, ‘Idha Tathāgato anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbuto’tipi. Ye hi keci, Ānanda, cetiyacārikaṃ āhiṇḍantā pasannacittā kālaṅkarissanti, sabbe te kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggāṃ lokaṃ upapajjissanti”ti.

202. “Formerly, Venerable sir, when they had spent the rainy season in different districts, the monks used to come to see the Tathāgata, and we used to receive those monks, and to wait upon the Blessed One. However, after the passing of the Blessed One, we will not be able to receive those monks, and to wait upon the Blessed One.”

“There are these four places, Ānanda, that the believing man should visit with feelings of religious emotion. Which four? The place, Ānanda, at which the believing man can say, ‘Here the Tathāgata was born,’ is a spot to be visited with feelings of religious emotion. The place, Ānanda, at which the believing man can say, ‘Here the Tathāgata, attained to the supreme and perfect Enlightenment’ is a spot to be visited with feelings of religious emotion. The place, Ānanda, at which the believing man can say, ‘Here was the incomparable wheel of Dhamma set rolling by the Tathāgata,’ is a spot to be visited with feelings of religious emotion. The place, Ānanda, at which

the believing man can say, 'Here the Tathāgata finally passed away in that utter passing away that leaves nothing whatever behind,' is a spot to be visited with feelings of religious emotion.

"There will come, Ānanda, to such spots, devout monks and nuns of the Saṅgha, or male and female lay disciples, who will say, 'Here was the Tathāgata born,' or, 'Here the Tathāgata attained to the supreme and perfect Enlightenment,' or, 'Here the wheel of Dhamma was set rolling by the Tathāgata,' or, 'Here the Tathāgata finally passed away in that utter passing away that leaves nothing whatever behind.' They, Ānanda, who die with believing heart, while on such a pilgrimage, will be reborn after death, on the break-up of the body, in the fortunate heavenly realms."

As in other religions, pilgrimage to places associated with the life of the founder of our religion is popular among devout followers. Many disciples travel to Lumbinī, Buddhagayā, Saranathī, and Kusināgara, to visit the sacred spots where the Bodhisatta was born, where the Buddha gained Enlightenment, where he taught his first discourse, and where he passed away, attaining Parinibbāna. I also visited these four main sites as a young man, prior to my ordination. At that time, I knew very little about the history of Buddhism, so I did not visit other famous sites such as Nālandā and Rājagaha — I was more interested to visit *Igatpuri* where I attended a 10-day meditation retreat with S.N. Goenka. He is no longer living, but the meditation tradition that he established has expanded enormously worldwide.

To my way of thinking, it is more important to attend such retreats to practise the Buddha's teaching than to go on pilgrimage to the holy sites. It is in keeping with the Buddha's advice to Ānanda on how best to pay homage to the Blessed One. That's not to discourage anyone from going on pilgrimage if they feel inspired to do so, but if you have the time and money to visit India, then do take 10-days at least to attend such a retreat — to visit the four holy sites needs four days at the most, and staying in those places is costly, while staying in a meditation centre is entirely free of charge. When you leave, you can make a donation for the benefit of others.

The Account of Venerable Ānanda's Questions (*Ānandapucchākathā*)

203. *"Kathaṃ mayam, bhante, mātuḡāme paṭipajjāmā"ti? "Adassanam, Ānandā"ti. "Dassane, Bhagavā, sati kathaṃ paṭipajjitabba"nti? "Anālāpo, Ānandā"ti. "Ālapantena pana, bhante, kathaṃ paṭipajjitabba"nti? "Sati, Ānanda, upatthāpetabbā"ti.*

203. "How are we to conduct ourselves, Venerable sir, with regard to women?"

"Do not look at them, Ānanda."

"However, if we should see them, what should we do?"

"Do not speak to them, Ānanda."

"However, if we should speak to them, Venerable sir, what should we do?"

"Be mindful, Ānanda."

In footnote 430 of his translation, Maurice Walshe comments "This small passage seems arbitrarily inserted at this point," and he gives a cross-reference to the Saṅyuttanikāya, 35.127 (S.iv.110), which is a conversation between the Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, an Arahant, and King Udena, who asked how young monks manage to live the holy life. The Venerable Piṇḍola replies that they regard women as their mothers, sisters, or daughters. King Udena thinks that this might not be enough to control sexual desire, then the Venerable Piṇḍola explains about the contemplation of the 32 body parts, then about sense-faculty restraint. The king is finally satisfied that this method would be effective.

The Venerable Piṇḍola was the son of king Udena's chaplain, and was greedy by nature. After following the Buddha's advice, he became an Arahant. King Udena was a lustful and passionate man. On an earlier occasion, when he found the same monk talking to the women of his harem, in a fit of jealousy he had a nest of red ants poured over his body. After this later conversation, he took refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, and became a disciple of the Venerable Piṇḍola.

I have no way of knowing if this question belongs here in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta or not, but Venerable Ānanda was someone who had to deal with women frequently, so it is a question he might well have asked at that time, knowing that the Buddha would no longer be around to protect him if his mind wandered to sensual thoughts. Staying with a teacher like the Buddha, who could read one's every thought, would be a powerful aid to controlling one's lustful thoughts. Dealing with women is a problem for celibate monks. Most monks who disrobe do so after forming emotional attachments to women. Although monks do not wish to make it difficult for women to learn the Dhamma, and it is often women who are the most reliable supporters of monks, if there is too close and friendly an association between a monk and a woman, then intimacy and lust are always a danger. If the Buddha's advice to Ānanda is heeded then monks would be able to remain contented in living the holy life.

204. "Kathaṃ mayam, bhante, Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjāmā"ti? "Abyāvatā tumhe, Ānanda, hotha Tathāgatassa sarīrapūjāya. Iṅgha tumhe, Ānanda, sārathhe

ghaṭatha anuyuñjatha, sāraththe appamattā ātāpino pahitattā viharatha. Sant'Ānanda, khattiyapaṇḍitāpi brāhmaṇapaṇḍitāpi gahapatipaṇḍitāpi Tathāgate abhippasannā, te Tathāgatassa sarīrapūjaṃ karissanti"ti.

204. "What should we do, Venerable sir, with the remains of the Tathāgata?"

"Do not hinder yourselves, Ānanda, by honouring the remains of the Tathāgata. I urge you, Ānanda, to apply yourselves to your own welfare! Be mindful, zealous, and intent on your own welfare! There are wise men, Ānanda, among nobles, priests, householders and, who are firm believers in the Tathāgata; and they will do due honour to the remains of the Tathāgata."

205. "*Kathaṃ pana, bhante, Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabba*"nti? "*Yathā kho, Ānanda, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti, evaṃ Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabba*"nti. "*Kathaṃ pana, bhante, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti*"ti? "*Rañño, Ānanda, cakkavattissa sarīraṃ ahatena vatthena veṭhenti, ahatena vatthena veṭhetvā vihatena kappāsena veṭhenti, vihatena kappāsena veṭhetvā ahatena vatthena veṭhenti. Etenupāyena pañcahi yugasatehi rañño cakkavattissa sarīraṃ veṭhetvā āyasāya teladoniyā pakkhipitvā aññissā āyasāya doniyā paṭikujjito sabbagandhānaṃ citakaṃ karitvā rañño cakkavattissa sarīraṃ jhāpenti. Cātumahāpathe rañño cakkavattissa thūpaṃ karonti. Evaṃ kho, Ānanda, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti. Yathā kho, Ānanda, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti, evaṃ Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabbaṃ. Cātumahāpathe Tathāgatassa thūpo kātabbo. Tattha ye mālaṃ vā gandhaṃ vā cuṇṇakaṃ vā āropessanti vā abhivādessanti vā cittaṃ vā pasādessanti tesāṃ taṃ bhavissati dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāya.*"

205. "What should be done, Venerable sir, with the remains of the Tathāgata?"

"As men treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch, so, Ānanda, should they treat the remains of a Tathāgata."

"How, Venerable sir, do they treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch?"

"They wrap the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Ānanda, in a new cloth. When that is done they wrap it in carded cotton wool. When that is done they wrap it in a new cloth, and so on till they have wrapped the body in five hundred successive layers of both kinds. Then they place the body in an oil vessel of iron, and cover that close up with another oil vessel of iron. They then build a funeral pile of all kinds of perfumes, and burn the body of the wheel-turning monarch. Then at the four cross-roads they erect a pagoda to the wheel-turning monarch. This, Ānanda, is the way in which they treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch.

“As they treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch, so, Ānanda, should they treat the remains of the Tathāgata. At the cross-roads a pagoda should be erected to the Tathāgata. Whosoever shall there place garlands or perfumes or paint, or make salutation there, or become in its presence calm in heart — that shall long be to them for a profit and a joy.”

The wheel-turning monarch (Cakkavattī) in Buddhist texts is a very rare individual. In traditional Theravāda Buddhism, the Emperor Asoka and other great kings are referred to as wheel-turning monarchs. However, all such kings gained power over large dominions by wars involving the slaughter of many innocent victims by invading armies. A true world-turning monarch as described in the Cakkavatti Sutta or Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta of the Dīghanikāya, becomes a ruler over many nations by power of virtue and wisdom. The wheel that he rolls over many nations is not that of a war-chariot, but the wheel of righteousness and truth. There is a world of difference between obedience based on fear, and obedience based on respect.

The Four Individuals Worthy of a Pagoda (Thūpārahapuggalo)

206. *“Cattārome, Ānanda, thūpārahā. Katame cattāro? Tathāgato araham sammāsambuddho thūpāraho, paccekasambuddho thūpāraho, Tathāgatassa sāvako thūpāraho, rājā cakkavattī thūpārahoti.*

“KiñcĀnanda, atthavasam paṭicca Tathāgato araham sammāsambuddho thūpāraho? Ayam tassa Bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa thūpo’ti, Ānanda, bahujanā cittaṃ pasādentī. Te tattha cittaṃ pasādetvā kāyassa bhedaṃ paramaṃ marañā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjanti. Idam kho, Ānanda, atthavasam paṭicca Tathāgato araham sammāsambuddho thūpāraho.

“KiñcĀnanda, atthavasam paṭicca paccekasambuddho thūpāraho? Ayam tassa Bhagavato paccekasambuddhassa thūpo’ti, Ānanda, bahujanā cittaṃ pasādentī. Te tattha cittaṃ pasādetvā kāyassa bhedaṃ paramaṃ marañā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjanti. Idam kho, Ānanda, atthavasam paṭicca paccekasambuddho thūpāraho.

“KiñcĀnanda, atthavasam paṭicca Tathāgatassa sāvako thūpāraho? Ayam tassa Bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa sāvakassa thūpo’ti Ānanda, bahujanā cittaṃ pasādentī. Te tattha cittaṃ pasādetvā kāyassa bhedaṃ paramaṃ marañā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjanti. Idam kho, Ānanda, atthavasam paṭicca Tathāgatassa sāvako thūpāraho.

“KiñcĀnanda, atthavasam paṭicca rājā cakkavattī thūpāraho? Ayaṃ tassa dhammikassa dhammarañño thūpo’ti, Ānanda, bahujanā cittaṃ pasādentī. Te tattha cittaṃ pasādetvā kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ marañā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjanti. Idam kho, Ānanda, atthavasam paṭicca rājā cakkavattī thūpāraho. Ime kho, Ānanda cattāro thūpārahā”ti.

206. “These four, Ānanda, are worthy of a pagoda. Which four? A Tathāgata, a worthy, Fully Enlightened Buddha, is worthy of a pagoda, a Solitary Buddha is worthy of a pagoda, a disciple of the Tathāgata is worthy of a pagoda. A wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a pagoda. Why, Ānanda, is a Tathāgata, a worthy, Fully Enlightened Buddha worthy of a pagoda? At the thought, Ānanda, ‘This is the pagoda of that Blessed One, of that a worthy, Fully Enlightened Buddha,’ the hearts of many will be made calm and happy; and since they calmed and satisfied their hearts they will be reborn after death, on the break-up of the body, in fortunate heavenly realms. This is the reason, Ānanda, that a Tathāgata, a worthy, Fully Enlightened Buddha is worthy of a pagoda. Why, Ānanda, is a Solitary Buddha worthy of a pagoda? At the thought, Ānanda, ‘This is the pagoda of that Blessed One, of that Solitary Buddha,’ the hearts of many will be made calm and happy; and since they calmed and satisfied their hearts they will be reborn after death, on the break-up of the body, in the fortunate heavenly realms. This is the reason, Ānanda, that a Solitary Buddha is worthy of a pagoda. Why, Ānanda, is a disciple of the Blessed One, the Tathāgata, worthy of a pagoda? At the thought, Ānanda, ‘This is the pagoda of a disciple of the Tathāgata,’ the hearts of many will be made calm and happy; and since they calmed and satisfied their hearts they will be reborn after death, on the break-up of the body, in the fortunate heavenly realms. This is the reason, Ānanda, that a disciple of the Tathāgata, is worthy of a pagoda. Why, Ānanda, is a wheel-turning monarch worthy of a pagoda? At the thought, Ānanda, ‘This is the pagoda of that righteous king who ruled righteously,’ the hearts of many will be made calm and happy; and since they calmed and satisfied their hearts they will be reborn after death, on the break-up of the body, in the fortunate heavenly realms. This is the reason, Ānanda, that a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a pagoda. These four, Ānanda, are worthy of a pagoda.”

There are examples in the texts of pagodas being constructed over the remains of Arahants. Perhaps they were simple earth mounds, rather than the elaborate structures that we see today. In modern times too, devout Buddhists build pagodas in honour of their revered teachers like Ajahn Chah, who were thought to be Arahants.

Venerable Ānanda's Special Qualities (Ānanda Acchariyadhammo)

207. *Atha kho āyasmā Ānando vihāraṃ pavisitvā kapisīsaṃ ālambitvā rodamaṇo atthāsi — ‘Ahañca vatamhi sekho sakaraṇīyo, satthu ca me parinibbānaṃ bhavissati, yo mama anukampako’*ti. *Atha kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — ‘Kahaṃ nu kho, bhikkhave, Ānando’*ti? *‘Eso, bhante, āyasmā Ānando vihāraṃ pavisitvā kapisīsaṃ ālambitvā rodamaṇo tthito — ‘Ahañca vatamhi sekho sakaraṇīyo, satthu ca me parinibbānaṃ bhavissati, yo mama anukampako’*ti. *Atha kho Bhagavā aññataraṃ bhikkhuṃ āmantesi — ‘Ehi tvam, bhikkhu, mama vacanena Ānandaṃ āmantehi — ‘Satthā taṃ, āvuso Ānanda, āmanteti’*”ti. *‘Evaṃ, bhante’*ti kho so bhikkhu *Bhagavato paṭissutvā yenāyasmā Ānando tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ etadavoca — ‘Satthā taṃ, āvuso Ānanda, āmanteti’*ti. *‘Evaṃāvuso’*ti kho āyasmā Ānando tassa bhikkhuno paṭissutvā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. *Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ Bhagavā etadavoca — ‘Alaṃ, Ānanda, mā soci mā paridevi, nanu etaṃ, Ānanda, mayā paṭikacceva akkhātaṃ — ‘Sabbeheva piyehi manāpehi nānābhāvo vinābhāvo aññathābhāvo’; taṃ kutettha, Ānanda, labbhā. Yaṃ taṃ jātaṃ bhūtaṃ saṅkhataṃ palokadhammaṃ, taṃ vata Tathāgatassāpi sarīraṃ mā palujji’*ti *netam tthānaṃ vijjati. Dīgharattaṃ kho te, Ānanda, Tathāgato paccupaṭṭhito mettena kāyakammaena hitena sukkena advayena appamāṇena, mettena vacikammaena hitena sukkena advayena appamāṇena, mettena manokammaena hitena sukkena advayena appamāṇena. Katapuññosi tvam, Ānanda, padhānamanuyuñja, khippaṃ hohisi anāsavo’*ti.

207. Then the Venerable Ānanda went into the dwelling place (*vihāraṃ*), and stood leaning against the door-post, weeping at the thought, “Alas! I am just a learner, one who still has much to do. The teacher is about to pass away — he who was so compassionate to me!”

The Blessed One called the monks, saying: “Where, monks, is Ānanda?”

“The Venerable Ānanda, Venerable sir, has gone into the dwelling place, and stands leaning against the door-post, weeping at the thought, “Alas! I am just a learner, one who still has much to do. The teacher is about to pass away — he who was so compassionate to me!”

The Blessed One called a certain monk, saying, “Go to Ānanda, saying, “Venerable Ānanda, the teacher asks for you.”

The Venerable Ānanda was, at this stage just a Stream-winner, and so not free from attachment. Later, he attained to Arahanthood, just before the First Buddhist Council.

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the monk replied in assent. He approached Venerable Ānanda; and having approached said, “Venerable Ānanda, the teacher asks for you.”

“Yes, friend,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent to that monk. He went up to where the Blessed One was, and when he had come there, he paid homage to the Blessed One, and took his seat respectfully on one side.

Then the Blessed One said to the Venerable Ānanda, as he sat there by his side, “Enough, Ānanda! Do not distress yourself; do not weep! Have I not already, on former occasions, told you that it is in the very nature of all things most near and dear to us that we must divide ourselves from them, leave them, sever ourselves from them? How, then, Ānanda, can this be possible that anything born, brought into being, and organised, which contains within itself the inherent necessity of dissolution, can it be possible that such a being should not be dissolved? No such condition can exist! For a long time, Ānanda, you have been very close to me with acts, speech, and thoughts of unwavering kindness and well-wishing beyond measure. You have made merit, Ānanda! Strive diligently, and you will quickly be free from the corruptions!”

208. *Atha kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Yepi te, bhikkhave, ahesuṃ atītamaddhānaṃ arahanto sammāsambuddhā, tesampi Bhagavantānaṃ etapparamāyeva upatthākā ahesuṃ, seyyathāpi mayhaṃ Ānando. Yepi te, bhikkhave, bhavissanti anāgatamaddhānaṃ arahanto sammāsambuddhā, tesampi Bhagavantānaṃ etapparamāyeva upatthākā bhavissanti, seyyathāpi mayhaṃ Ānando. Paṇḍito, bhikkhave, Ānando; medhāvī, bhikkhave, Ānando. Jānāti Ayaṃ kālo Tathāgataṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamituṃ bhikkhūnaṃ, ayaṃ kālo bhikkhunīnaṃ, ayaṃ kālo upāsakānaṃ, ayaṃ kālo upāsikānaṃ, ayaṃ kālo rañño rājamahā-mattānaṃ tithiyānaṃ tithiyasāvakāna’nti.*

208. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: “Whosoever, monks, have been worthy, fully Enlightened Buddhas in the distant past, they had attendants just as devoted as Ānanda has been to me. Whosoever, monks, will be worthy, fully Enlightened Buddhas in the distant future, they will have attendants just as devoted as Ānanda has been to me. Ānanda is wise, monks, he is discerning. He knows the right time to come and visit the Tathāgata, and he knows the right time for monks, nuns, devout male and female lay disciples, kings, ministers, other teachers or their disciples, to come and visit the Tathāgata.

209. *“Cattārome, bhikkhave, acchariyā abbhutā dhammā Ānande. Katame cattāro? Sace, bhikkhave, bhikkhuparisā Ānandaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati,*

dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce Ānando dhammaṃ bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, bhikkhuparisā hoti, atha kho Ānando tuṅhī hoti. Sace, bhikkhave, bhikkhunīparisā Ānandaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce Ānando dhammaṃ bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, bhikkhunīparisā hoti, atha kho Ānando tuṅhī hoti. Sace, bhikkhave, upāsakaparisā Ānandaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce Ānando dhammaṃ bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, upāsakaparisā hoti, atha kho Ānando tuṅhī hoti. Sace, bhikkhave, upāsikāparisā Ānandaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce, Ānando, dhammaṃ bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, upāsikāparisā hoti, atha kho Ānando tuṅhī hoti. Ime kho, bhikkhave, cattāro acchariyā abbhutā dhammā Ānande.

“Cattārome, bhikkhave, acchariyā abbhutā dhammā raññe cakkavattimhi. Katame cattāro? Sace, bhikkhave, khattiyāparisā rājānaṃ cakkavattiṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce rājā cakkavattī bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, khattiyāparisā hoti. Atha kho rājā cakkavattī tuṅhī hoti. Sace bhikkhave, brāhmaṇāparisā ... Gahapatiparisā ... Samaṇāparisā rājānaṃ cakkavattiṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce rājā cakkavattī bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, samaṇāparisā hoti, atha kho rājā cakkavattī tuṅhī hoti. Evameva kho, bhikkhave, cattārome acchariyā abbhutā dhammā Ānande. Sace, bhikkhave, bhikkhuparisā Ānandaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce Ānando dhammaṃ bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, bhikkhuparisā hoti. Atha kho Ānando tuṅhī hoti. Sace, bhikkhave bhikkhunīparisā ... Upāsakaparisā ... Upāsikāparisā Ānandaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkamati, dassanena sā attamanā hoti. Tatra ce Ānando dhammaṃ bhāsati, bhāsitenapi sā attamanā hoti. Atittāva, bhikkhave, upāsikāparisā hoti. Atha kho Ānando tuṅhī hoti. Ime kho, bhikkhave, cattāro acchariyā abbhutā dhammā Ānande”ti.

209. “Monks, there are these four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ānanda. What four? If, monks, a number of monks come to visit Ānanda, they are filled with joy on beholding him; and if Ānanda should teach the Dhamma to them, they are filled with joy at the discourse; while they are ill at ease, monks, when Ānanda is silent. If, monks, a number of nuns, or devout male or female lay disciples come to visit Ānanda, they are filled with joy on beholding him; and if Ānanda should teach the Dhamma to them, they are filled with joy at the discourse; while the company is ill at ease, monks, when Ānanda is silent.

“Monks, there are these four wonderful and marvellous qualities in a wheel-turning monarch. What are the four? If, monks, a number of nobles, priests, householder, or recluses come to visit a wheel-turning monarch, they are filled with joy on beholding him; and if the wheel-turning monarch speaks, they are filled with joy at what is said; while they are ill at ease, monks, when the wheel-turning monarch is silent. Just so, monks, are the four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ānanda. If, monks, a number of monks come to visit Ānanda, they are filled with joy on beholding him; and if Ānanda should teach the Dhamma to them, they are filled with joy at the discourse; while they are ill at ease, monks, when Ānanda is silent. If, monks, a number of nuns, or devout male or female lay disciples come to visit Ānanda, they are filled with joy on beholding him; and if Ānanda should teach the Dhamma to them, they are filled with joy at the discourse; while the company is ill at ease, monks, when Ānanda is silent. These, monks, are the four wonderful and marvellous qualities possessed by Ānanda.”

The Teaching of the Mahāsudassana Sutta (Mahāsudassanasuttadesanā)

210. *Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Mā, bhante, Bhagavā imasmim̐ khuddakanagarake ujjāṅgalanagarake sākḥānagarake parinibbāyi. Santi, bhante, aññāni mahānagarāni, seyyathidaṃ — campā Rājagahaṃ Sāvattḥī sāketaṃ kosambī bārāṇasī; ettha Bhagavā parinibbāyatu. Ettha bahū khattiyamahāsālā, brāhmaṇamahāsālā gahapatimahāsālā Tathāgate abhippasannā. Te Tathāgatassa sarīrapūjaṃ karissanti”*ti “Māhevaṃ, Ānanda, avaca; māhevaṃ, Ānanda, avaca — ‘Khuddakanagarakaṃ ujjāṅgalanagarakaṃ sākḥānagaraka’nti.

“Bhūtapubbam, Ānanda, rājā mahāsudassano nāma ahoṣi cakkavattī dhammiko dhammarājā cāturato vijitāvī janappadatthāvāriyappatto sattaratanasamannāgato. Rañño, Ānanda, mahāsudassanassa ayaṃ kusinārā kusāvati nāma rājadhāni ahoṣi, puratthimena ca pacchimena ca dvādasayojanāni āyāmena; uttarena ca dakkhiṇena ca sattayojanāni vitthārena. Kusāvati, Ānanda, rājadhāni iddhā ceva ahoṣi phitā ca bahujanā ca ākiṇṇamanussā ca subhikkhā ca. Seyyathāpi, Ānanda, devānaṃ ālakamandā nāma rājadhāni iddhā ceva hoti phitā ca bahujanā ca ākiṇṇayakkhā ca subhikkhā ca; evameva kho, Ānanda, kusāvati rājadhāni iddhā ceva ahoṣi phitā ca bahujanā ca ākiṇṇamanussā ca subhikkhā ca. Kusāvati, Ānanda, rājadhāni dasahi saddehi avivittā ahoṣi divā ceva rattiṇca, seyyathidaṃ — hatthisaddena assasaddena

rathasaddena bherisaddena mudiṅgasaddena viṅāsaddena gītasaddena saṅkhasaddena sammasaddena paṇitālasaddena ‘Asnātha pivatha khādathā’*ti dasamena saddena.*

“Gaccha tvaṃ, Ānanda, kusiṇārāṃ pavisitvā kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ ārocehi — ‘Ajja kho, vāseṭṭhā, rattiyā pacchime yāme Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Abhikkamatha vāseṭṭhā, abhikkamatha vāseṭṭhā. Mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha — amhākañca no gāmakkhette Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ ahosi, na mayaṃ labhimhā pacchime kāle Tathāgataṃ dassanāyā”*ti.* “Evaṃ, bhante”*ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paṭissutvā nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya attadutiyo kusiṇārāṃ pāvīsi.*

210. When he had thus spoken, the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “Let not the Blessed One die in this small town (*khuddakanagarake*), in this barren town (*ujjaṅgalanagarake*), in this suburb (*sākhānagarake*). Venerable sir, there are other great cities, such as Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvatti, Sāketa, Kosambī, and Benares. Let the Blessed One die in one of them. There live many wealthy nobles, priests, and householders who are believers in the Tathāgata, who will pay due honour to the remains of the Tathāgata.”

“Say not so, Ānanda! Do not say, Ānanda, that this is just a small and barren suburb. Long ago, Ānanda, there was a king by name of Mahāsudassana, a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous man who ruled righteously, lord of the four quarters of the earth, conqueror, the protector of his people, possessor of the seven royal treasures. This Kusiṇārā, Ānanda, was the capital city of King Mahāsudassana named Kusāvati. On the east and west it was twelve leagues in length, and on the north and south it was seven leagues in breadth.

“That royal city of Kusāvati, Ānanda, was mighty and prosperous, crowded with people, and well provided with food. Just, Ānanda, as the royal city of the gods named Āḷakamaṇḍā is mighty and prosperous, crowded with gods, and well provided with food, so, Ānanda, was the royal city Kusāvati mighty and prosperous, crowded with people, and well provided with food.

“Both by day and by night, Ānanda, the royal city Kusāvati reverberated with ten sounds; that is to say, the sounds of elephants, horses, chariots; drums, tabor and lute; singing, the cymbal and gong; and with the cry, “Eat, drink, and be merry!”

“Go, Ānanda, enter Kusiṇārā, and inform the [Mallas of Kusiṇārā](#), saying, “Today, Vāseṭṭhas, in the last watch of the night, the final passing away of the Tathāgata will take place. Come Vāseṭṭhas, give no reason to reproach yourselves later, ‘In our own village the death of the Tathāgata took place, but we did not take the opportunity to visit the Tathāgata in his final hours.’”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent; and he robed himself, and taking his bowl, entered Kusinārā attended by a second monk.

This brief account in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is expanded to a full discourse — the Mahāsudassana Sutta — which follows the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta in the Digheṇikāya. It describes the seven treasures possessed by a Wheel-turning monarch (Cakkavatti), and describes the wealth, virtue, and longevity of King Sudassana in some detail. It concludes by identifying the King as a previous existence of the Buddha when he was a Bodhisatta, and the Buddha concludes by emphasising the impermanence of all conditioned things with the verse that is always recited at Buddhist funerals:

*“Aniccā vata saṅkhārā, uppādavayadhammino.
upparjitoṃ nirujjhanti, tesam vūpasamo sukho”*ti.

“Impermanent, alas, are all conditioned things
Subject to decay, having arisen they cease,
Their cessation is blissful.”

The Homage of the Mallas (Mallānaṃ Vandanā)

211. Tena kho pana samayena kosinārakā mallā sandhāgāre sannipatitā honti kenacideva karaṇīyena. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ sandhāgāraṃ tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitoṃ kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ ārocesi — “Ajja kho, vāsetṭhā, rattiyā pacchime yāme Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Abhikkamatha vāsetṭhā abhikkamatha vāsetṭhā. Mā pacchā vipparisārinō ahuvattha — ‘Amhākaṅca no gāmakkhette Tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ ahosi, na mayaṃ labhimhā pacchime kāle Tathāgataṃ dassanāyā”ti. Idamāyasmato Ānandassa vacanaṃ sutvā mallā ca Mallaputtā ca mallasuṅṅhā ca mallapajāpatiyo ca aghāvino dummanā cetodukkkhasamappitā appekacce kese pakiriya kandanti, bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvattanti vivattanti — ‘Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbāyissati, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbāyissati, atikhippaṃ cakkhum loke antaradhāyissati’ti. Atha kho mallā ca Mallaputtā ca mallasuṅṅhā ca mallapajāpatiyo ca aghāvino dummanā cetodukkkhasamappitā yena upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sālavanaṃ yenāyasmā Ānando tenupasaṅkamiṃsu. Atha kho āyasmato Ānandassa etadahosi — “Sace kho ahaṃ kosinārake malle ekamekaṃ Bhagavantaṃ vandāpessāmi, avandito Bhagavā kosinārakehi mallehi bhavissati, athāyaṃ ratti vibhāyissati. Yaṃnūnāhaṃ kosinārake malle kulaparivattaso kulaparivattaso thapetvā Bhagavantaṃ vandāpeyyaṃ — ‘Itthannāmo, bhante, mallo saputto sabhāriyo sapaṇṇo sāmacco Bhagavato pāde sirasā vandati’ti. Atha kho āyasmā

Ānando kosinārake malle kulaparivattaso kulaparivattaso ṭhapetvā Bhagavantam vandāpesi — 'Itthannāmo, bhante, mallo saputto sabhariyo saporiso sāmacco Bhagavato pāde sirasā vandatī''ti. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando etena upāyena paṭhameneva yāmena kosinārake malle Bhagavantam vandāpesi.

211. At that time the Mallas of Kusinārā were assembled in the council hall on some public business. The Venerable Ānanda went to the council hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā; and when he had arrived he informed them, saying, "Today, Vāsetṭhās, in the last watch of the night, the final passing away of the Tathāgata will take place. Come Vāsetṭhas, give no reason to reproach yourselves later, 'In our own village the death of the Tathāgata took place, but we did not take the opportunity to visit the Tathāgata in his final hours.'"

When they had heard the words of the Venerable Ānanda, the Mallas with their young men, maidens, and wives were grieved, and sad, and afflicted at heart. Some of them wept, tearing their hair, and stretched forth their arms and wept, fell prostrate on the ground, and rolled to and fro in anguish at the thought, "Too soon will the Blessed One die! Too soon will the Fortunate One pass away! Too soon will the eye of the world disappear!"

Then the Mallas, with their young men and maidens and their wives, being grieved and sad and afflicted at heart, went to the Sal Grove of the Mallas, to where the Venerable Ānanda was staying.

The Venerable Ānanda thought: "If I allow the Mallas of Kusinārā, one by one, to pay their respects to the Blessed One, the whole of the Mallas of Kusinārā will not have been presented to the Blessed One until this night brightens up into the dawn. Let me, now, cause the Mallas of Kusinārā to stand in groups, each family in a group, and so present them to the Blessed One, saying, 'Venerable sir, a Malla of such and such a name, with his children, his wives, his retinue, and his friends, humbly bows down at the feet of the Blessed One.'" The Venerable Ānanda therefore caused the Mallas of Kusinārā to stand in groups, each family in a group, and so presented them to the Blessed One, saying, "Venerable sir! a Malla of such and such a name, with his children, his wives, his retinue, and his friends, humbly bows down at the feet of the Blessed One." In this way the Venerable Ānanda presented all of the Mallas of Kusinārā to the Blessed One in the first watch of the night.

The Story of the Wanderer Subhadda (Subhaddaparibbājakavatthu)

212. Tena kho pana samayena subhaddo nāma paribbājako kusinārāyaṃ paṭivasati. Assosi kho subhaddo paribbājako — “Ajja kira rattiyā pacchime yāme samaṇassa Gotamassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati”ti. Atha kho subhaddassa paribbājakassa etadahosi — “Sutaṃ kho pana metaṃ paribbājakānaṃ vuddhānaṃ mahallakānaṃ ācariyapācariyānaṃ bhāsamānānaṃ — ‘Kadāci karahaci Tathāgatā loke uppajjanti arahanto sammāsambuddhā’ti. Ajjeva rattiyā pacchime yāme samaṇassa Gotamassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Atthi ca me ayaṃ kaṅkhādhammo uppanno, evaṃ pasanno ahaṃ samaṇe Gotame, ‘Pahoti me samaṇo Gotamo tathā dhammaṃ desetum, yathāhaṃ imaṃ kaṅkhādhammaṃ pajaheyya’”nti. Atha kho subhaddo paribbājako yena upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sālavanaṃ, yenāyasmā Ānando tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ etadavoca — “Sutaṃ metaṃ, bho Ānanda, paribbājakānaṃ vuddhānaṃ mahallakānaṃ ācariyapācariyānaṃ bhāsamānānaṃ — ‘Kadāci karahaci Tathāgatā loke uppajjanti arahanto sammāsambuddhā’ti. Ajjeva rattiyā pacchime yāme samaṇassa Gotamassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Atthi ca me ayaṃ kaṅkhādhammo uppanno — evaṃ pasanno ahaṃ samaṇe Gotame ‘Pahoti me samaṇo Gotamo tathā dhammaṃ desetum, yathāhaṃ imaṃ kaṅkhādhammaṃ pajaheyya’”nti. Sādhāhaṃ, bho Ānanda, labheyyaṃ samaṇaṃ Gotamaṃ dassanāyā”ti. Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando subhaddaṃ paribbājakaṃ etadavoca — “Alaṃ, āvuso subhadda, mā Tathāgataṃ vihethesi, kilanto Bhagavā”ti. Dutiyampi kho subhaddo paribbājako ... Tatiyampi kho subhaddo paribbājako āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ etadavoca — “Sutaṃ metaṃ, bho Ānanda, paribbājakānaṃ vuddhānaṃ mahallakānaṃ ācariyapācariyānaṃ bhāsamānānaṃ — ‘Kadāci karahaci Tathāgatā loke uppajjanti arahanto sammāsambuddhā’ti. Ajjeva rattiyā pacchime yāme samaṇassa Gotamassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati. Atthi ca me ayaṃ kaṅkhādhammo uppanno — evaṃ pasanno ahaṃ samaṇe Gotame, ‘Pahoti me samaṇo Gotamo tathā dhammaṃ desetum, yathāhaṃ imaṃ kaṅkhādhammaṃ pajaheyya’”nti. Sādhāhaṃ, bho Ānanda, labheyyaṃ samaṇaṃ Gotamaṃ dassanāyā”ti. Tatiyampi kho āyasmā Ānando subhaddaṃ paribbājakaṃ etadavoca — “Alaṃ, āvuso subhadda, mā Tathāgataṃ vihethesi, kilanto Bhagavā”ti.

212. At that time a wanderer named Subhadda was dwelling at Kusinārā. The wanderer Subhadda heard the news, “Today, in the third watch of the night, the final passing away of the recluse Gotama will take place.” Then the wanderer Subhadda thought, “I have heard from fellow wanderers of mine, well advanced in years, teachers of teachers, who said, “Very rarely

do Tathāgatas appear in the world, worthy, fully Enlightened Buddhas.” Yet today, in the last watch of the night, the final passing away of the recluse Gotama will take place. Uncertainty has arisen in my mind; and I have this faith in the recluse Gotama, that he is able to teach me the Dhamma so that I may be able to get rid of this uncertainty.” So the wanderer Subhadda went to the Sal Grove of the Mallas at Kusinārā, to where Venerable Ānanda was staying. When he arrived he said to the Venerable Ānanda, “I have heard from fellow wanderers of mine, well advanced in years, teachers of teachers, who said, ‘Very rarely do Tathāgatas appear in the world, worthy, fully Enlightened Buddhas.’ Yet today, in the last watch of the night, the final passing away of the recluse Gotama will take place. Uncertainty has arisen in my mind; and I have this faith in the recluse Gotama, that he is able to teach me the Dhamma so that I may be able to get rid of this uncertainty. May I, Ānanda, be allowed to see the recluse Gotama!”

When he had thus spoken the Venerable Ānanda said to the wanderer Subhadda, “Enough, friend Subhadda. Do not trouble the Tathāgata. The Blessed One is weary.”

The wanderer Subhadda [made the same request in the same words, a second and third time and received the same reply.]

213. Assosi kho Bhagavā āyasmato Ānandassa subhaddena paribbājakena saddhiṃ imaṃ kathāsallāpaṃ. Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānantaṃ āmantesi — “Alaṃ, Ānanda, mā subhaddaṃ vāresi, labhataṃ, Ānanda, subhaddo Tathāgataṃ dassanāya. Yaṃ kiñci maṃ subhaddo pucchissati, sabbaṃ taṃ aññāpekkhova pucchissati, no vihesāpekkho. Yaṃ cassāhaṃ puṭṭho byākarissāmi, taṃ khippameva ājānissati”ti. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando subhaddaṃ paribbājakaṃ etadavoca — “Gacchāvuso subhadda, karoti te Bhagavā okāsa”nti. Atha kho subhaddo paribbājako yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavatā saddhiṃ sammodi, sammodanīyaṃ kathaṃ sāraṇīyaṃ vītisāretvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho subhaddo paribbājako Bhagavantaṃ etadavoca — “Yeme, bho Gotama, samaṇabrāhmaṇā saṅghino gaṇino gaṇācariyā nītā yasassino titthakarā sādhusammata bahujanassa, seyyathidaṃ — pūraṇo kassapo, makkhali gosālo, ajito kesakambalo, pakudho kaccāyano, sañcayo belatṭhaputto, nigaṇṭho nāṭaputto, sabbete sakāya paṭiññāya abbaññiṃsu, sabbeva na abbaññiṃsu, udāhu ekacce abbaññiṃsu, ekacce na abbaññiṃsū”ti? “Alaṃ, subhadda, titṭhatetaṃ — ‘Sabbete sakāya paṭiññāya abbaññiṃsu, sabbeva na abbaññiṃsu, udāhu ekacce abbaññiṃsu, ekacce na abbaññiṃsū’ti. Dhammaṃ te, subhadda, desessāmi; taṃ sunāhi sādhukaṃ manasikarohi, bhāsissāmi”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho subhaddo paribbājako Bhagavato paccassosi. Bhagavā etadavoca —

213. The Blessed One overheard this conversation of the Venerable Ānanda with the wanderer Subhadda. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Enough, Ānanda! Do not keep Subhadda away. Subhadda, Ānanda, may be permitted to see the Tathāgata. Whatever Subhadda may ask of me, he will ask from a desire for knowledge, and not to annoy me. Whatever I may say in answer to his questions, that he will quickly understand.”

Then the Venerable Ānanda said to Subhadda, the wanderer, “Enter, friend Subhadda; for the Blessed One gives you leave.”

Then Subhadda, the wanderer, went to where the Blessed One was, and greeted him courteously, and after exchanging polite and friendly speech, took a seat on one side. Seated thus, Subhadda the wanderer, said to the Blessed One, “These recluses and priests, Gotama, who are heads of groups of disciples and students, teachers of students, well known, renowned, founders of schools, esteemed by the multitude, namely: Purāṇa Kassapa, Makkhali of the cattle-pen, Ajita of the hair-garment, Kaccāyana of the Pakudha tree, Sañcaya Belaṭṭhiputta, and Nigaṇṭha Nāthaputta, have they all, according to their own assertion, thoroughly understood things? Or have they not? Or are there some of them who have understood, and some who have not?”

“Enough, Subhadda! Let this matter rest whether they, according to their own assertion, have thoroughly understood things, or whether they have not, or whether some of them have understood and some have not! I teach you the Dhamma, Subhadda, listen and pay careful attention, I will speak.”

“Yes, Venerable sir,” the Venerable Subhadda replied in assent.

The Blessed One said this:

214. *“Yasmiṃ kho, subhadda, dhammavinaye ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo na upalabbhati, samaṇopi tattha na upalabbhati. Dutiyopi tattha samaṇo na upalabbhati. Tatiyopi tattha samaṇo na upalabbhati. Catutthopi tattha samaṇo na upalabbhati. Yasmiṃca kho, subhadda, dhammavinaye ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo upalabbhati, samaṇopi tattha upalabbhati, dutiyopi tattha samaṇo upalabbhati, tatiyopi tattha samaṇo upalabbhati, catutthopi tattha samaṇo upalabbhati. Imasmiṃ kho, subhadda, dhammavinaye ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo upalabbhati, idheva, subhadda, samaṇo, idha dutiyo samaṇo, idha tatiyo samaṇo, idha catuttho samaṇo, suññā parappavādā samaṇebhi aññehi. Ime ca, subhadda, bhikkhū sammā vihareyyuṃ, asuñño loko arahantehi assāti.*

*“Ekūnatiṃso vayasā subhadda,
Yaṃ pabbajim kiṃkusalānu esī.*

*Vassāni paññāsa samādhikāni,
Yato ahaṃ pabbajito subhadda.*

*Ñāyassa dhammassa padesavattī,
Ito bahiddhā samaṇopi natthi.*

“Dutiyopi samaṇo natthi. Tatiyopi samaṇo natthi. Catutthopi samaṇo natthi. Suññā parappavādā samaṇebhi aññehi. Ime ca, subhadda, bhikkhū sammā vihareyyum, asuñño loko arahantehi assā”ti.

214. “In whatsoever doctrine and discipline, Subhadda, the Noble Eightfold Path is not found, there a true recluse of the first, second, third, or fourth grade is not found. In whatsoever doctrine and discipline, Subhadda, the Noble Eightfold Path is found, there is found the true recluse of the first, second, third, and fourth grade. In this doctrine and discipline, Subhadda, is found the Noble Eightfold Path; in it alone is found the true recluse of the first, second, third, and fourth grade. Empty are the systems of other teachers — they are devoid of true recluses. In this one, Subhadda, as long as the monks live the perfect life, the world will not be bereft of Arahants.”

“Twenty-nine was I when I renounced
The world, Subhadda, seeking after good.
For fifty years and one year more, Subhadda,
Since I went out, one gone forth have I been
Through the wide realms of virtue and of truth,
Outside of these no true recluse can be!”

“Neither the first true recluse, nor the second, nor the third, nor of the fourth grade. Empty are the systems of other teachers — devoid of true recluses. In this one, Subhadda, if the monks live the perfect life, the world will not be bereft of Arahants.”

215. *Evam vutte subhaddo paribbājako Bhagavantam etadavoca — “Abhikkantam, bhante, abhikkantam, bhante. Seyyathāpi, bhante, nikkujjitam vā ukkujjeyya, paṭicchannaṃ vā vivareyya, mūlhassa vā maggaṃ ācikkheyya, andhakāre vā telapajjotam dhāreyya, ‘Cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhanti’ti, evamevaṃ Bhagavatā anekapariyāyena dhammo pakāsito. Esāhaṃ, bhante, Bhagavantam saraṇaṃ gacchāmi dhammaṃca bhikkhusaṅghaṃca. Labheyyaṃ, bhante, Bhagavato santike pabbajjaṃ, labheyyaṃ upasampada”nti. “Yo kho, subhadda, aññatitthiyapubbo imasmiṃ dhammaavinaye ākaṅkhati pabbajjaṃ, ākaṅkhati upasampadaṃ, so cattāro māse parivasati. Catunnaṃ māsānaṃ accayena āraddhacittā bhikkhū pabbājenti upasampādentī bhikkhubhāvāya. Api ca mettha puggalavemattatā vidadā”ti. “Sace, bhante, aññatitthiyapubbā imasmiṃ dhamma-*

vinaye ākaṅkhaṅkā pabbajjaṃ ākaṅkhaṅkā upasampadaṃ cattāro māse parivasanti, catunnaṃ māsānaṃ accayena āraddhacittā bhikkhū pabbājenti upasampādentī bhikkhubhāvāya. Ahaṃ cattāri vassāni parivasissāmi, catunnaṃ vassānaṃ accayena āraddhacittā bhikkhū pabbājentū upasampādentū bhikkhubhāvāyā”ti.

Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Tenah’Ānanda, subhaddaṃ pabbājehī”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato pacassosi. Atha kho subhaddo paribbājako āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ etadavoca — “Lābhā vo, āvuso Ānanda; suladdhaṃ vo, āvuso Ānanda, ye ettha satthu sammukhā antevāsikābhisekena abhisittā”ti. Alatta kho subhaddo paribbājako Bhagavato santike pabbajjaṃ, alatta upasampadaṃ. Acirūpasampanno kho panāyasmā subhaddo eko vūpakaṭṭho appamatto ātāpī pahitatto viharanto nacirasseva — ‘Yassatthāya kulaputtā sammadeva agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajanti’ tadanuttaraṃ brahmacariyapariyosānaṃ dittheva dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihāsi. ‘Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ iṭṭhattāyā’ti abbhaññāsi. Aññataro kho panāyasmā subhaddo arahataṃ ahoṣi. So Bhagavato pacchimo sakkhisāvako ahoṣīti.

Pañcama Bhānavāro

215. When he had spoken thus, Subhadda, the wanderer, said to the Blessed One, “Most excellent, Venerable sir, are your words, most excellent! Just as a man might set upright what has fallen down, or reveal that which is hidden, or point out the right path to one who has gone astray, or bring a lamp into the darkness, so that those who have eyes can see forms — Yes, Venerable sir, has the truth been made known to me, in many a figure, by the Blessed One. I go to the Blessed One as my refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha. May the Blessed One accept me as a disciple, as a true disciple, from this day forth, as long as life endures! May I obtain the going-forth in the presence of the Blessed One? May I receive the higher ordination?”

“Whoever, Subhadda, has formerly been a follower of another doctrine, then wishes to be obtain the going-forth and higher ordination in this doctrine and discipline, if he remains on probation for four months; and at the end of four months, the monks, if they agree, may grant him the going-forth or the higher ordination. However, I recognise a difference in individuals.”

“If, Venerable sir, whoever has formerly been a follower of another doctrine, then wishes to obtain the going-forth and higher ordination in this doctrine and discipline, if such a person remains on probation for the space of four months; and at the end of the four months, the monks, if they agree, may grant him the going-forth and the higher ordination — I then, will remain

on probation for four years; and at the end of the four years let the monks, if they agree grant me the going-forth and the higher ordination!"

Then the Blessed One called the Venerable Ānanda, saying, "As it is, Ānanda, grant Subhadda the going-forth!"

"Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent.

Then Subhadda, the wanderer, said to the Venerable Ānanda, "Great is your gain, friend Ānanda, great is your good fortune, friend Ānanda, that you have been sprinkled with the sprinkling of discipleship in this monkhood at the hands of the teacher himself!"

So Subhadda, the wanderer, obtained the going-forth in the presence of the Blessed One, and the higher ordination. From immediately after his ordination the Venerable Subhadda remained alone and aloof, earnest, zealous, and resolved. Before long he attained the highest goal of the holy life for the sake of which men go forth, realising for himself, and abiding in it. He knew that birth was at an end, that the holy life had been fulfilled, that what should be done had been done, and that would be no more rebirth. Thus the Venerable Subhadda became another of the Arahants; and he was the last direct disciple of the Blessed One.

This key passage makes it clear that there is no liberation from suffering outside of the Buddha's teaching. This will not surprise anyone who knows the teachings well. Other religions do not even aspire to put an end to the cycle of death and rebirth. Their aim is only to go to heaven. Buddhism, which regards all existence, even in celestial realms, as fundamentally unsatisfactory, is seen as pessimistic by followers of other religions. The [Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta](#) says that following the noble eightfold path is the only way to attain the four stages of Sainthood and put an end to suffering. This passage is the corollary of that, without practising the noble eightfold path no one can attain any stage of Sainthood.

*To an average lay person who does not practise meditation, and who delights in sensual pleasures, any person who lives a celibate life, abstaining from sexual relationships, having few possessions, devoted to caring for the sick or doing some other selfless service for the community, may seem like a saint. However, according to the Buddha's teaching, one is not a true saint until the pernicious self-view or belief in an eternal soul is eradicated by insight. This cannot be achieved by any method, other than cultivating mindfulness to the highest degree, and gaining genuine insight into the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and not-self (*anatta*). No attainment of moral purity, deep concentration, or mystic powers can eradicate the deep-seated wrong view of egoism.*

The Buddha's Last Words

(*Tathāgatapacchimavācā*)

216. *Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Siyā kho pan’Ānanda, tumhākaṃ evamassa — ‘Atitasatthukaṃ pāvacaṇaṃ, natthi no satthā’ti. Na kho panetaṃ, Ānanda, evaṃ datṭhabbaṃ. Yo vo, Ānanda, mayā dhammo ca vinayo ca desito paññatto, so vo mamaccayena satthā. Yathā kho pan’Ānanda, etarahi bhikkhū aññamaññaṃ āvusovādena samudācaranti, na kho mamaccayena evaṃ samudācaritabbaṃ. Theratarena, Ānanda, bhikkhunā navakatara bhikkhu nāmena vā gottena vā āvusovādena vā samudācaritabbo. Navakatarena bhikkhunā therataro bhikkhu ‘Bhante’ti vā ‘Āyasmā’ti vā samudācaritabbo. Ākaṅkhamāno, Ānanda, saṅgho mamaccayena khuddānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadāni samūhanatu. Channassa, Ānanda, bhikkhuno mamaccayena brahmadāṇo dātabbo’ti. “Katamo pana, bhante, brahmadāṇo’ti? “Channo, Ānanda, bhikkhu yaṃ iccheyya, taṃ vadeyya. So bhikkhūhi neva vattabbo, na ovaditabbo, na anusāsitabbo’ti.*

216. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, saying, “It may be, Ānanda, that in some of you the thought may arise, ‘The word of the teacher has ended, we no longer have a teacher!’ However, Ānanda, you should regard it like this. The Dhamma and discipline that I have set forth and laid down for you will be your teacher after I am gone.”

“Ānanda, after I am gone do not address one another as you do now as friend (*āvuso*). A junior monk may be addressed by an elder by his name, or family name, or as friend, but an elder should be addressed by a junior monk as “Venerable sir (*bhante*) or reverend (*āyasmā*).”

“After I am gone, Ānanda, let the Saṅgha if it should so wish, abolish the lesser and minor precepts (*khuddānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadāni*).”

At the first Buddhist Council, soon after the Buddha's demise, the five hundred Arahanats were also not unanimous about this matter, and they blamed the Venerable Ānanda for not asking about it. Some Arahanats said, ‘Apart from the four offences of defeat, the remainder are lesser and minor.’ Others said, ‘Apart from the four offences of defeat and the thirteen offences requiring formal meeting, the rest are lesser and minor.’ Others said, ‘... and the two indeterminate offences, the rest are lesser and minor.’ Others said, ‘... and the thirty offences requiring expiation with forfeiture, the rest are lesser and minor offences.’ Others said, ‘... and the ninety-two offences requiring expiation, the rest are lesser and minor.’ Others said, ‘... and four offences requiring confession, the rest are lesser and minor.’

Since there were different opinions, Venerable Mahākassapa addressed the monks saying: "People will say, 'While the Buddha was alive the monks followed the training rules, but after his passing away they do not.' So we should continue to train ourselves in all of the precepts." Thus the five hundred Arahants agreed not to abolish any training rules. Not one of the later Councils abolished any training rules either.

That was the decision made by the five hundred Arahants, and all later Buddhist Councils, so the monks of the present day must also train themselves in all of the training precepts. There is no legitimate reason to ignore a single one of them. Nevertheless, one should distinguish between serious, medium, and minor offences.

In the *Milinda Pañha* the Arahant Nāgasena says that the Buddha gave permission to abolish the lesser and minor rules to test his disciples, as a king on his death-bed might test his sons by saying, "You can let the border regions go after my death if you wish." Then the sons would surely make efforts to subdue the border regions, and even conquer more territory. Venerable Nāgasena concludes, "The offences of wrong-doing are the lesser precepts, and offences of wrong speech are the minor precepts." I will now show why this is a wise decision.

As already pointed out, groundlessly accusing a monk of defeat leads to rebirth in hell, unless one admits the offence and apologises. For a monk, this offence requires a formal meeting of the Saṅgha.

Causing a schism in the Saṅgha is heavy kamma that inevitably leads to rebirth in hell. Striving to create a schism, when admonished by the Saṅgha to desist, is an offence requiring a formal meeting of the Saṅgha. Clearly, offences that lead to hell or that require a formal meeting of the Saṅgha are not minor offences.

A novice must observe ten precepts, which includes not accepting money. If a bhikkhu accepts money, it must be forfeited to the Saṅgha. The Saṅgha must then give it to a lay person or appoint a bhikkhu to dispose of it. The money must be thrown away outside the monastery, taking no notice of where it falls. So offences requiring confession with forfeiture are not minor, since they deal with a bhikkhu's correct means of livelihood, and some donations of the faithful may go to waste.

If a bhikkhu kills an animal, tells a deliberate lie, abuses, slanders, hits, or threatens a bhikkhu, drinks intoxicants, or eats after midday, these are offences requiring expiation. These offences are contrary to the five or eight precepts observed by lay disciples, temple attendants and nuns, so they are also not minor offences.

If a bhikkhu who is staying in a remote area, which is considered dangerous due to wild beasts or robbers, accepts almsfood in his own place, thus endangering lay

supporters who bring it, it is an offence requiring confession. Since his action endangers the life or property of lay people, this offence cannot be regarded as minor either.

If a bhikkhu laughs loudly in town, if he talks with food in his mouth, if he teaches Dhamma while standing to one who is sitting, if he urinates while standing — these are offences of wrong-doing. If he makes a sarcastic remark or tells a joke, it is an offence of wrong speech. These offences should be avoided too, but they can rightly be called lesser and minor offences. Having committed any of them, a bhikkhu should confess his offence, and undertake to restrain himself in the future. He should not overlook them, nor dismiss them as trivial.

The [seventy-second offence requiring expiation](#) states: “While the Pātimokkha is being recited, if any bhikkhu should say, ‘Why are these lesser and minor training rules recited? They only lead to worry, bother, and fret’ then in disparaging the training rules there is an offence requiring expiation.” Thus, the sanctity of the lesser and minor training rules is protected by a specific offence requiring expiation.

The [seventy-third offence requiring expiation](#) expects every bhikkhu to be familiar with all of the training rules included in the Pātimokkha (in Pāli), within four to six weeks of his ordination. Claiming ignorance of the rule as a defence requires expiation, and he is also to be censured by the Saṅgha for his ignorance.

“After I am gone, Ānanda, let the punishment of Brahma (*brahmadāṇḍa*) be imposed on monk Channa.”

“What, Venerable sir, is the punishment of Brahma?”

“Let Channa say whatever he likes, Ānanda, the monks should neither speak to him, nor exhort him, nor admonish him.”

At the beginning of this discourse in [paragraph 136](#), the Buddha states so long as the monks establish nothing that has not been already prescribed, and abrogate nothing that has been already established, and act in accordance with the rules of the Order as now laid down then they will prosper and not decline. In [paragraph 138](#) he says that practising with shame of wrong doing (*hiri*) and fear of wrong doing (*ottappa*) are two more factors for non-decline for a monk. The Venerable Channa was lacking in these two qualities, and would not heed the advice of his fellow monks, making himself difficult to speak to. In the [Kesi Sutta](#), the Buddha tells the horse-trainer that if his fellows in the holy-life think that a monk is not worth speaking to, it leads to his destruction. This punishment of Brahma is therefore a kind of ostracism imposed on Channa, who later reformed himself, and thus the penalty was later revoked.

217. *Atha kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Siyā kho pana, bhikkhave, ekabhikkhussāpi kaṅkhā vā vimati vā buddhe vā dhamme vā saṅghe vā magge vā paṭipadāya vā, pucchatha, bhikkhave, mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha — ‘Sammukhībhūto no satthā ahoṣi, na mayaṃ sakkhimhā Bhagavantam sammukhā paṭipucchitu’” nti. Evaṃ vutte te bhikkhū tuṅhī ahesuṃ. Dutiyampi kho Bhagavā ... Tatiyampi kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Siyā kho pana, bhikkhave, ekabhikkhussāpi kaṅkhā vā vimati vā buddhe vā dhamme vā saṅghe vā magge vā paṭipadāya vā, pucchatha, bhikkhave, mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha — ‘Sammukhībhūto no satthā ahoṣi, na mayaṃ sakkhimhā Bhagavantam sammukhā paṭipucchitu’” nti. Tatiyampi kho te bhikkhū tuṅhī ahesuṃ. Atha kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Siyā kho pana, bhikkhave, satthugāravenapi na puccheyyātha. Sahāyakopi, bhikkhave, sahāyakassa ārocetū” ti. Evaṃ vutte te bhikkhū tuṅhī ahesuṃ. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etadavoca — ‘Acchariyaṃ, bhante, abbhutaṃ, bhante, evaṃ pasanno ahaṃ, bhante, imasmiṃ bhikkhusaṅghe, Natthi ekabhikkhussāpi kaṅkhā vā vimati vā buddhe vā dhamme vā saṅghe vā magge vā paṭipadāya vā’” ti. “Pasādā kho tvaṃ, Ānanda, vadesi, nīṇameva hettha, Ānanda, Tathāgatassa. Natthi imasmiṃ bhikkhusaṅghe ekabhikkhussāpi kaṅkhā vā vimati vā buddhe vā dhamme vā saṅghe vā magge vā paṭipadāya vā. Imesañhi, Ānanda, pañcannaṃ bhikkhusatānaṃ yo pacchimako bhikkhu, so sotāpanno avinipātadhammo niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo” ti.*

217. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying, “It may be, monks, that there doubts or concerns in the mind of some monk about the Buddha, Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Path, or the practice. Ask freely, monks. Do not reproach yourselves later with the thought, “Our teacher was face to face with us, and we could not bring ourselves to ask the Blessed One when we were face to face with him.” When he had thus spoken the monks were silent. A second and the third time the Blessed One addressed the monks [in the same way] and a third time the monks were silent. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: “It may be, monks, that you ask no questions out of respect for the teacher, then let a companion ask on your behalf.” When he had spoken thus the monks were silent. Then the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “How wonderful it is, Venerable sir, how marvellous, I believe that in this community of monks there is not one who has any doubt or concerns about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Path, or the practice!”

“It is out of faith that you have spoken thus, Ānanda, but, Ānanda, the Tathāgata knows for certain that in this whole community of monks there is not one who has any doubt or concerns about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Path, or the practice! Even the most backward, Ānanda, of all

these five hundred monks is a Stream-winner, and no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, and is assured of final liberation.”

218. *Atha kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi — “Handa dāni, bhikkhave, āmantayāmi vo, vayadhammā saṅkhārā appamādena sampādethā”ti. Ayaṃ Tathāgataṃ pacchimā vācā.*

218. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying, “Now, monks, I exhort you, “Decay is inherent in all formations! Strive with diligence!”

These were the last words of the Tathāgata!

The Account of the Final Decease (*Parinibbutakathā*)

219. *Atha kho Bhagavā paṭhamaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, paṭhamajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, dutiyajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā tatiyaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, tatiyajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā catutthaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji. Catutthajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā ākāsaṇācāyatanaṃ samāpajji, ākāsaṇācāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā viññāṇaṇcāyatanaṃ samāpajji, viññāṇaṇcāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā ākiñcaṇṇāyatanaṃ samāpajji, ākiñcaṇṇāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ samāpajji, nevasaññānāsaññāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ samāpajji.*

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando āyasmantaṃ Anuruddhaṃ etadavoca — “Parinibbuto, bhante Anuruddha, Bhagavā”ti. “Nāvuso Ānanda, Bhagavā parinibbuto, saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ samāpanno”ti.

Atha kho Bhagavā saññāvedayitanirodhasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ samāpajji, nevasaññānāsaññāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā ākiñcaṇṇāyatanaṃ samāpajji, ākiñcaṇṇāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā viññāṇaṇcāyatanaṃ samāpajji, viññāṇaṇcāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā ākāsaṇācāyatanaṃ samāpajji, ākāsaṇācāyatanasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā catutthaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, catutthajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā tatiyaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, tatiyajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, dutiyajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā paṭhamaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, paṭhamajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, dutiyajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā tatiyaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, tatiyajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā catutthaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajji, catutthajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā samanantarā Bhagavā parinibbāyi.

219. Then the Blessed One entered the first absorption. Emerging from the first absorption he entered the second. Emerging from the second he entered the third. Emerging from the third he entered the fourth. Emerging

from the fourth absorption he entered the infinity of space. Emerging from the infinity of space he entered the infinity of consciousness. Emerging from the infinity of consciousness he entered the state of nothingness. Emerging from the state of nothingness he entered the state of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from the state neither perception nor non-perception he entered the cessation of perception and feeling.

Then the Venerable Ānanda said to the Venerable Anuruddha, “Venerable Anuruddha, has the Blessed One passed away?”

“No! Ānanda, the Blessed One has not passed away. He has entered the cessation of perception and feeling.”

Then the Blessed One emerging from the cessation of perception and feeling, entered the state of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from the state of neither perception nor non-perception he entered the state of nothingness. Emerging from the state of nothingness he entered into the infinity of consciousness. Emerging from infinity of consciousness he entered into the infinity of space. Emerging from the infinity of space he entered into the fourth absorption. Emerging from the fourth absorption he entered into the third. Emerging from the third he entered the second. Emerging from the second he entered into the first absorption. Emerging from the first absorption he entered into the second. Emerging from of the second he entered the third. Emerging from the third he entered the fourth absorption. Emerging from fourth absorption he attained final cessation (*parinibbāna*).

220. Parinibbute Bhagavati saha parinibbānā mahābhūmicālo ahoṣi bhiṃsanako salomahaṃso. Devadundubhiyo ca phaliṃsu. Parinibbute Bhagavati saha parinibbānā brahmāsahampati imaṃ gāthaṃ abhāsi —

“Sabbeva nikkhipissanti, bhūtā loke samussayaṃ.

Yattha etādiso sathā, loke appaṭipuggalo.

Tathāgato balappatto, sambuddho parinibbuto”ti.

220. When the Blessed One attained final cessation there arose, at the moment of his final cessation, a mighty earthquake, terrible and awe-inspiring and thunder sounded. When the Blessed One attained cessation, Brahmā Sahampati, at the moment of his final cessation, uttered this stanza:

“They all, all beings that have life, shall lay
 Aside their complex form — that aggregation
 Of mental and material qualities,
 That gives them, or in heaven or on earth,

Their fleeting individuality!
 Even as the teacher — being such a one,
 Unequaled among all the men that are,
 Successor of the prophets of old time,
 Mighty by wisdom, and in insight clear has died!"

221. *Parinibbute Bhagavati saha parinibbānā sakko devānamindo imaṃ gāthaṃ abhāsi:*

*"Aniccā vata saṅkhārā, uppādavayadhammino.
 Uppajjitvā nirujjhanti, tesam vūpasamo sukho"ti.*

221. When the Blessed One attained final cessation, Sakka, the king of the gods, at the moment of his final cessation, uttered this stanza:

"They're transient all, each being's parts and powers,
 Growth is their nature, and decay.
 They are produced, they are dissolved again:
 Then is best, when they have sunk to rest!"

222. *Parinibbute Bhagavati saha parinibbānā āyasmā Anuruddho imā gāthāyo abhāsi:*

*"Nāhu assāsapassāso, t̥hitacittassa tādino.
 anejo santimārabbha, yaṃ kālamakarī muni.
 "Asallīnena cittena, vedanaṃ ajjhavāsaya.
 Pajjotasseva nibbānaṃ, vimokkho cetaso ahū"ti.*

222. When the Blessed One attained final cessation, the Venerable Anuruddha, at the moment of his final cessation, uttered these stanzas:

"When he who from all craving want was free,
 Who to nibbāna's tranquil state had reached,
 When the great sage finished his span of life,
 No gasping struggle vexed that steadfast heart!
 All resolute, and with unshaken mind,
 He calmly triumphed over the pain of death.
 Even as a bright flame dies away, so was
 His last deliverance from the bonds of life!"

223. *Parinibbute Bhagavati saha parinibbānā āyasmā Ānando imaṃ gāthaṃ abhāsi:*

*"Tadāsi yaṃ bhiṃsanakaṃ, tadāsi lomahaṃsanaṃ.
 Sabbākāravarūpete, sambuddhe parinibbute"ti.*

223. When the Blessed One died, the Venerable Ānanda, at the moment of his passing away from existence, uttered this stanza:

“Then was there terror!
Then stood the hair on end!
When he endowed with every grace —
The supreme Buddha attained final cessation!”

224. *Parinibbute Bhagavati ye te tattha bhikkhū avītarāgā appekacce bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvaṭṭanti vivaṭṭanti, “Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antarahito”ti. Ye pana te bhikkhū vītarāgā, te satā sampajānā adhiṅāsenti — ‘Aniccā saṅkhārā, taṃ kutettha labbhā’ti.*

224. When the Blessed One attained final cessation, of those monks who were not yet free from the passions, some stretched out their arms and wept, and some fell headlong on the ground, rolling to and fro in anguish at the thought, “Too soon has the Blessed One died! Too soon has the Fortunate One passed away from existence! Too soon has the eye of the world disappeared!” However, those monks who were free from the passions remained mindful and clearly comprehending at the thought, “Impermanent are all formation! How is it possible that [they should not be dissolved]?”

225. *Atha kho āyasmā Anuruddho bhikkhū āmantesi — “Alaṃ, āvuso, mā sociṭṭha mā paridevīṭṭha. Nanu etaṃ, āvuso, Bhagavatā paṭikacceva akkhātaṃ — ‘Sabbeheva piyehi manāpehi nānābhāvo vinābhāvo aññathābhāvo’. Taṃ kutettha, āvuso, labbhā. ‘Yaṃ taṃ jātaṃ bhūtaṃ saṅkhataṃ palokadhammaṃ, taṃ vata mā palujji’ti, neṭaṃ ṭhānaṃ vijjati. Devatā, āvuso, ujjhāyanti”ti. “Kathambhūtā pana, bhante, āyasmā Anuruddho devatā manasi karoti”ti?*

“Santāvuso Ānanda, devatā ākāse pathavīsaññīniyo kese pakiriya kandanti, bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvaṭṭanti, vivaṭṭanti — Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antarahito’ti. Santāvuso Ānanda, devatā pathaviyā pathavīsaññīniyo kese pakiriya kandanti, bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvaṭṭanti, vivaṭṭanti — Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antarahito’ti. Yā pana tā devatā vītarāgā, tā satā sampajānā adhiṅāsenti — Aniccā saṅkhārā, taṃ kutettha labbhā’ti. Atha kho āyasmā ca Anuruddho āyasmā ca Ānando taṃ rattāvasesaṃ dhammiyā kathāya vītināmesuṃ.

225. Then the Venerable Anuruddha exhorted the monks, saying, “Enough, friends! Weep not, nor lament! Has the Blessed One not taught us that it is in the very nature of all things near and dear to us, that we must divide ourselves from them, leave them, sever ourselves from them? How, monks, can it be — since anything born, brought into being, and organised, contains within itself the inherent necessity of dissolution — that such a being should not be dissolved? No such condition can exist! The deities, monks, will reproach us.”

“Venerable sir, what kind of deities does the Venerable Anuruddha have in mind?”

“There are deities, friend Ānanda, in the sky, but of worldly mind, who tear their hair, stretch forth their arms, and weep, falling prostrate on the ground, and rolling to and fro in anguish at the thought, ‘Too soon has the Blessed One attained final cessation! Too soon has the Fortunate One passed away! Too soon has the eye of the world disappeared!’ There are also deities, Ānanda, on the earth, and of worldly mind, who tear their hair, stretch forth their arms and weep, falling prostrate on the ground, rolling to and fro in anguish at the thought, ‘Too soon has the Blessed one attained final cessation! Too soon has the Fortunate One passed away! Too soon has the eye of the world disappeared!’ However, the deities who are free from passion bear it, mindful and clearly comprehending at the thought, ‘Impermanent are all formation! How is it possible that [they should not be dissolved]?’”

The Venerable Anuruddha and the Venerable Ānanda spent the rest of that night in religious discourse.

226. *Atha kho āyasmā Anuruddho āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi — “Gacchāvuso Ānanda, kusināraṃ pavisitvā kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ ārocehi — ‘Parinibbuto, vāseṭṭhā, Bhagavā, yassadāni kālaṃ maññathā’”ti. “Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā Ānando āyasmato Anuruddhassa paṭissutovā pubbaṅhasamayaṃ nivāsetvā pattacīvaramādāya attadutiyo kusināraṃ pāvīsi. Tena kho pana samayena kosinārakā mallā sandhāgāre sannipatitā honti teneva karaṇīyena. Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ sandhāgāraṃ tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ ārocesi — ‘Parinibbuto, vāseṭṭhā, Bhagavā, yassadāni kālaṃ maññathā’ti. Idamāyasmato Ānandassa vacanaṃ sutovā mallā ca Mallaputtā ca mallasuṇisā ca mallapajāpatiyo ca aghāvino dummanā cetodukkhasamappitā appekacce kese pakiriya kandanti, bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvaṭṭanti, vivaṭṭanti — “Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antarahito”ti.*

226. Then the Venerable Anuruddha said to the Venerable Ānanda, "Go, friend Ānanda, into Kusinārā and inform the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, "The Blessed One, Vāseṭṭhas, has attained final cessation. Do whatever you deem fit!" "Yes, Venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Venerable Anuruddha. Having robed himself early in the morning, he took his bowl, and went into Kusinārā with one of the monks as an attendant. At that time the Mallas of Kusinārā were assembled in the council hall concerning that very matter. Then the Venerable Ānanda went to the council hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā; and when he had arrived there, he informed them, saying, "The Blessed One, Vāseṭṭhas, has attained final cessation. Do, whatever you deem fit!" When they had heard this saying of the Venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, with their young men and their maidens and their wives, were grieved, and sad, and afflicted at heart. Some of them wept, tearing their hair, some stretched forth their arms and wept, and some fell prostrate on the ground, and some rolled to and fro in anguish at the thought, "Too soon has the Blessed One attained final cessation! Too soon has the Fortunate One passed away! Too soon has the eye of the world disappeared!"

The Venerable *Anuruddha* was ordained on the same day as Venerable Ānanda, along with Bhaddiya, Bhagu, Kimbila, Devadatta, and Upāli. The Sākya noble youths requested that Upāli be ordained first so that their pride would be humbled. Anuruddha was apparently the leader of the group, and was ordained before Ānanda, hence according to the *Buddha's instructions*, Anuruddha addressed Ānanda as friend (*Āvuso*), and Ānanda addressed Anuruddha as Venerable Sir (*Bhante*), although their ordinations may have been only a few minutes apart.

Honouring the Buddha's Body (*Buddhasarīrapūjā*)

227. *Atha kho kosinārakā mallā purise añāpesuṃ — "Tena hi, bhāṇe, kusinārāyaṃ gandhamālaṅca sabbaṅca tālāvacaraṃ sannipāsethā"ti. Atha kho kosinārakā mallā gandhamālaṅca sabbaṅca tālāvacaraṃ paṅca ca dussayugasatāni ādāya yena upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sālavanaṃ, yena Bhagavato sarīraṃ tenupasaṅkamiṃsu; upasaṅkamitoṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garuṃ karontā mānentā pūjentā celavitānāni karontā maṇḍalamāle paṭiyādentā ekadivasaṃ vītināmesuṃ.*

Atha kho kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ etadahosi — "Ativikālo kho ajja Bhagavato sarīraṃ jhāpetuṃ, soe dāni mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ jhāpessāma"ti. Atha kho kosinārakā mallā

Bhagavato sarīraṃ naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garuṃ karontā mānentā pūjentā celavitānāni karontā maṇḍalamāle paṭiyādentā dutiyampi divasaṃ vītināmesuṃ, tatiyampi divasaṃ vītināmesuṃ, catutthampi divasaṃ vītināmesuṃ, pañcamampi divasaṃ vītināmesuṃ, chatthampi divasaṃ vītināmesuṃ.

Atha kho sattamaṃ divasaṃ kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ etadahosi — “Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garuṃ karontā mānentā pūjentā dakkhiṇena dakkhiṇaṃ nagarassa haritvā bāhirena bāhiraṃ dakkhiṇato nagarassa Bhagavato sarīraṃ jhāpessāma”ti.

227. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā gave orders to their attendants, saying, “Gather together perfumes and garlands, and all the musicians in Kusinārā!” The Mallas of Kusinārā took the perfumes and garlands, and all the musicians, and five hundred suits of apparel, and went to the Sal Grove of the Mallas, where the Blessed One’s body lay. There they passed the day in paying respect, honour, reverence, and homage to the remains of the Blessed One with dancing, songs, and music, with garlands and perfumes; making canopies of their garments, and preparing decorations.

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā thought: “It is much too late to burn the Blessed One’s body today. Let us perform the cremation tomorrow.” In paying respect, honour, reverence, and homage to the remains of the Blessed One with dancing, songs, and music, with garlands and perfumes; and in making canopies of their garments, and preparing decorations, they passed the second day too, and then the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth day too.

Then on the seventh day the Mallas of Kusinārā thought: “Let us carry the Blessed One’s body, out by the south gate to a spot outside the south side of the city — paying it respect, honour, reverence, and homage with dance, song, and music, with garlands and perfumes — and there, to the south of the city, let us perform the cremation ceremony!”

228. *Tena kho pana samayena aṭṭha mallapāmokkhā sīsaṃnhātā ahatāni vatthāni nivatthā “Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ uccāressāma”ti na sakkonti uccāretuṃ. Atha kho kosinārakā mallā āyasmantaṃ Anuruddhaṃ etadavocuṃ — “Ko nu kho, bhante Anuruddha, hetu ko paccayo, yenime aṭṭha mallapāmokkhā sīsaṃnhātā ahatāni vatthāni nivatthā ‘Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ uccāressāma’ti na sakkonti uccāretu”nti? “Aññathā kho, vāseṭṭhā, tumhākaṃ adhippāyo, aññathā devatānaṃ adhippāyo”ti. “Kathaṃ pana, bhante, devatānaṃ adhippāyo”ti? “Tumhākaṃ kho, vāseṭṭhā, adhippāyo — ‘Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garuṃ karontā mānentā pūjentā dakkhiṇena dakkhiṇaṃ nagarassa haritvā bāhirena bāhiraṃ dakkhiṇato nagarassa Bhagavato sarīraṃ*

jhāpessāmā'ti; devatānaṃ kho, vāseṭṭhā, adhippāyo — 'Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ dibbehi naccehi gītehi vāditehi gandhehi sakkarontā garuṃ karontā mānentā pūjentā uttarena uttaraṃ nagarassa haritvā uttarena dvārena nagaraṃ pavesetvā majjhena majjhaṃ nagarassa haritvā puratthimena dvārena nikkhamitvā puratthimato nagarassa makuṭabandhanaṃ nāma mallānaṃ cetiyaṃ ettha Bhagavato sarīraṃ jhāpessāmā'ti. "Yathā, bhante, devatānaṃ adhippāyo, tathā hotū"ti.

228. Then eight Malla chieftains bathed their heads, and clad themselves in new garments with the intention of bearing the Blessed One's body, but they could not lift it up! Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said to the Venerable Anuruddha, "What, Venerable sir, is the reason, what is the cause, that eight Malla chieftains who have bathed their heads, and clad themselves in new garments with the intention of bearing the Blessed One's body, are unable to lift it up?"

"It is because you, Vāseṭṭhas, have one purpose, and the deities have another."

"What, Venerable sir, is the purpose of the deities?"

"Your purpose, O Vāseṭṭhas, is this, 'Let us carry the Blessed One's body, out by the south gate to a spot outside the south side of the city — paying it respect, honour, reverence, and homage with dance, song, and music, with garlands and perfumes — and there, to the south of the city, let us perform the cremation ceremony,' but the purpose of the deities, Vāseṭṭhas, is this, 'Let us carry the Blessed One's body by the north to the north of the city, and entering the city by the north gate, let us bring it to the midst of the city. Going out again by the eastern gate — paying it respect, honour, reverence, and homage with dance, song, and music, with garlands and perfumes — let us carry it to the Malla shrine called Makuṭabandhana, to the east of the city, and there let us perform the cremation ceremony.'"

"Even according to the purpose of the deities, so, Venerable sir, let it be!"

229. *Tena kho pana samayena kusinārā yāva sandhisamalasamkaṭṭirā jaṇṇumattena odhinā mandāravapupphehi santhatā hoti. Atha kho devatā ca kosinārakā ca mallā Bhagavato sarīraṃ dibbehi ca mānusakehi ca naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garuṃ karontā mānentā pūjentā uttarena uttaraṃ nagarassa haritvā uttarena dvārena nagaraṃ pavesetvā majjhena majjhaṃ nagarassa haritvā puratthimena dvārena nikkhamitvā puratthimato nagarassa makuṭabandhanaṃ nāma mallānaṃ cetiyaṃ ettha ca Bhagavato sarīraṃ nikkhipiṃsu.*

229. Immediately the whole of Kusinārā town, even the sewers and rubbish heaps became strewn knee-deep with celestial Mandārava flowers. Then the

deities and the Mallas of Kusinārā paid respect, honour, reverence, and homage to the Blessed One's body with dance, song, and music, with garlands and perfumes. They carried the body by the north to the north of the city; and entering the city by the north gate they carried it into the midst of the city; and going out again by the eastern gate they carried it to the Malla shrine called Makuṭabandhana; and there, to the east of the city, they laid down the Blessed One's body.

230. *Atha kho kosinārakā mallā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ etadavocum — “Kathaṃ mayaṃ, bhante Ānanda, Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjāma”ti? “Yathā kho, vāsetṭhā, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti, evaṃ Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabba”nti. “Kathaṃ pana, bhante Ānanda, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti”ti? “Rañño, vāsetṭhā, cakkavattissa sarīraṃ ahatena vatthena veṭṭenti, ahatena vatthena veṭṭetvā vihatena kappāsena veṭṭenti, vihatena kappāsena veṭṭetvā ahatena vatthena veṭṭenti. Etena upāyena pañcahi yugasatehi rañño cakkavattissa sarīraṃ veṭṭetvā āyasāya teladoṇiyā pakkhipitvā aññissā āyasāya doṇiyā paṭikujjitvā sabbagandhānaṃ citakaṃ karitvā rañño cakkavattissa sarīraṃ jhāpenti. Cātumahāpathe rañño cakkavattissa thūpaṃ karonti. Evaṃ kho, vāsetṭhā, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti. Yathā kho, vāsetṭhā, rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti, evaṃ Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabbaṃ. Cātumahāpathe Tathāgatassa thūpo kātabbo. Tattha ye mālaṃ vā gandhaṃ vā cunṇakaṃ vā āropessanti vā abhivādessanti vā cittaṃ vā pasādessanti, tesam taṃ bhavissati dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāyā”ti. Atha kho kosinārakā mallā purise añāpesum — “Tena hi, bhāṇe, mallānaṃ vihatam kappāsam sannipātethā”ti.*

Atha kho kosinārakā mallā Bhagavato sarīraṃ ahatena vatthena veṭṭetvā vihatena kappāsena veṭṭesum, vihatena kappāsena veṭṭetvā ahatena vatthena veṭṭesum. Etena upāyena pañcahi yugasatehi Bhagavato sarīraṃ veṭṭetvā āyasāya teladoṇiyā pakkhipitvā aññissā āyasāya doṇiyā paṭikujjitvā sabbagandhānaṃ citakaṃ karitvā Bhagavato sarīraṃ citakaṃ āropesum.

230. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said to the Venerable Ānanda, “What should be done, Venerable sir, with the remains of the Tathāgata?”

“As men treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch, so, Vāsetṭhas, should the remains of a Tathāgata be treated.”

“How, Venerable sir, do they treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch?”

“They wrap the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Vāsetṭhas, in a new cloth. When that is done they wrap it in cotton wool. When that is done they wrap it in a new cloth, and so on until they have wrapped the body in five hundred successive layers of both kinds. Then they place the body in an oil

vessel of iron, and cover that close up with another oil vessel of iron. They then build a funeral pyre of all kinds of perfumes, and burn the body of the wheel-turning monarch. Then at the cross-roads they erect a pagoda to the wheel-turning monarch. This, Vāseṭṭhas, is how they treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch.

“As they treat the remains of a wheel-turning monarch, so, Vāseṭṭhas, should the remains of the Tathāgata be treated. At the cross-roads a pagoda should be erected to the Tathāgata. Whosoever places garlands, perfumes, or coloured paste, or pays homage there, or becomes serene there — that will be a profit and a joy to them for a long time.”

Then the Mallas gave orders to their attendants, saying, “Gather all the carded cotton wool of the Mallas!”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā wrapped the Blessed One’s body in a new cloth. When that was done, they wrapped it in cotton wool. When that was done, they wrapped it in a new cloth — and so on until they had wrapped the Blessed One’s body in five hundred layers of both kinds. Then they placed the body in an oil vessel of iron, and covered that close up with another oil vessel of iron. Then they built a funeral pile of all kinds of perfumes, and upon it they placed the Blessed One’s body.

The Story of Venerable Mahākassapa (Mahākassapattheravatthu)

231. *Tena kho pana samayena āyasmā Mahākassapo pāvāya kusināraṃ addhānamaggappaṭippanno hoti mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ pañcamattehi bhikkhusatehi. Atha kho āyasmā Mahākassapo maggā okkamma aññatarasmim rukkhāmūle nisīdi. Tena kho pana samayena aññataro ājīvako kusinārāya mandāravapupphaṃ gahetvā pāvaṃ addhānamaggappaṭippanno hoti. Addasā kho āyasmā Mahākassapo taṃ ājīvakaṃ dūratova āgacchantam, disvā taṃ ājīvakaṃ etadavoca — “Apāvuso, amhākaṃ satthāraṃ jānāsī”ti? “Āmāvuso, jānāmi, ajja sattāhparinibbuto samaṇo Gotamo. Tato me idaṃ mandāravapupphaṃ gahita”nti. Tattha ye te bhikkhū avitarāgā appekacce bāhā paggayha kandanti, chinnapātaṃ papatanti, āvattanti, vivattanti — “Atikhippaṃ Bhagavā parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ sugato parinibbuto, atikhippaṃ cakkhuṃ loke antarahito”ti. Ye pana te bhikkhū vitarāgā, te satā sampajānā adhivāsenti — “Aniccā saṅkhārā, taṃ kutettha labbhā”ti.*

231. At that time the Venerable Mahākassapa was going along the high road from Pāvā to Kusinārā with a great company of monks, with about five hundred of the monks. The Venerable Mahākassapa left the high road, and

sat down at the foot of a certain tree. At that time a certain naked ascetic who had picked up a Mandārava flower in Kusinārā was coming along the high road to Pāvā. The Venerable Mahākassapa saw the naked ascetic coming in the distance; and when he had seen him he said to the naked ascetic, “Friend! Surely you know our teacher?”

“Yes, friend! I know him. Today the recluse Gotama has been dead for a week That is how I obtained this Mandārava flower.”

Immediately those monks who were not yet free from the passions, stretched out their arms and wept, some fell prostrate on the ground, and some rolled to and fro in anguish at the thought, “Too soon has the Blessed One attained final cessation! Too soon has the Fortunate One passed away! Too soon has the eye of the world disappeared!” However, those monks who were free from passion bore their grief mindfully and clearly comprehending at the thought, “Impermanent are all formations! How is it possible that they should not be dissolved?”

232. *Tena kho pana samayena subhaddo nāma vuddhapabbajito tassaṃ parisāyaṃ nisinno hoti. Atha kho subhaddo vuddhapabbajito te bhikkhū etadavoca — “Alaṃ, āvuso, mā socittha, mā paridevittha, sumuttā mayaṃ tena mahāsamaṇena. Upaddutā ca homa — ‘Idaṃ vo kappati, idaṃ vo na kappati’ ti. Idāni pana mayaṃ yaṃ icchissāma, taṃ karissāma, yaṃ na icchissāma, na taṃ karissāmā” ti. Atha kho āyasmā Mahākassapo bhikkhū āmantesi — “Alaṃ, āvuso, mā socittha, mā paridevittha. Nanu etaṃ, āvuso, Bhagavatā paṭikacceva akkhātaṃ — ‘Sabbeheva piyehi manāpehi nānābhāvo vinābhāvo aññathābhāvo’. Taṃ kutettha, āvuso, labbhā. Yaṃ taṃ jātaṃ bhūtaṃ saṅkhatam palokadhammaṃ, taṃ Tathāgatassāpi sarīraṃ mā palujji’ ti, netaṃ ṭhānaṃ vijjati” ti.*

232. At that time a monk named **Subhadda**, who had gone-forth in old age, was seated in that company. Subhadda, who had gone-forth in old age, addressed the monks, saying, “Enough, monks! Do not grieve, do not lament! We are well rid of the great recluse. We used to be annoyed by being told, ‘This is allowable (*kappati*) for you, this is not allowable for you.’ Now we will be able to do whatever we want, and will not have to do what we do not want to do!”

There was another monk named Subhadda, [mentioned above](#) who was the last bhikkhu to go forth while the Blessed One was living. He practised diligently and soon became an Arahan̄t.

This Subhadda was very different. Subhadda had been a novice (*sāmaṇera*) at the time of the Buddha’s visit to [Ātumā](#), and had two sons before he joined the Order. When

he heard that the Buddha was coming, he sent for his two sons and gave orders for various foods to be collected to feed the Buddha and the twelve hundred and fifty monks. The Buddha arrived in the evening and took up his residence in Ātumā. All night long Subhadda went about giving instructions regarding the preparation of the food. In the morning of the next day the Buddha went out for alms, and Subhadda approached him and invited him to partake of the food which he had prepared. However, the Buddha questioned him, and, discovering what he had done, refused to accept the meal, forbidding the monks to do so too. This angered Subhadda, and he awaited an opportunity of expressing his disapproval of the Buddha. This opportunity came when he heard of the Buddha's death.

This incident shows how scrupulous the Buddha was about receiving only alms offered in the proper way. The first chapter of the *Visuddhimagga* on morality explains all manner of improper livelihood for a bhikkhu such as scheming, talking, hinting, belittling, and pursuing gain with gain. A bhikkhu is not a beggar, but an alms-gathering mendicant. When walking for alms, he does not draw attention to his presence, but stands silently at the gate to a house wherever he thinks someone may want to offer alms. If no one comes out to offer alms, then he moves on to the next house. Even when invited into a house to receive alms, he must eat only what is offered to him, and cannot just help himself to food that is put on the table. Food is considered to be properly offered if the donor is within alms-reach of the bhikkhu, and if the bhikkhu receives it onto a plate, receiving-cloth, tray, or into his almsbowl. If the donor just places the food somewhere in the bhikkhu's vicinity, it is not properly offered and should not be used. Not knowing the donor's intention, it might have been put there for another bhikkhu or for some other purpose, e.g. an offering to the departed or the donor might be waiting for someone else to come and make the formal offering to the Saṅgha.

So Subhadda's behaviour was ugly for a bhikkhu. Although it is allowable for a monk to request almsfood from his own blood-relatives, or to urge them to offer alms to the Saṅgha, there is no need for the bhikkhu to involve himself in the details of what is to be offered, or how it is to be prepared — that is for the donor to manage as he or she wishes. The Buddha knew that Subhadda's behaviour went far beyond what was suitable, so he refused the almsfood, and Subhadda took offence at this — later showing his disregard for the bhikkhu's training.

However, the Venerable Mahākassapa addressed the monks, saying, 'Enough, monks! Do not grieve, do not lament! Did the Blessed One not formerly declare that it is in the very nature of all things, near and dear to us, that we must divide ourselves from them, leave them, sever ourselves

from them? How then, monks, can this be possible that, since anything born, brought into being, and organised is inherently unstable how can such a being not be dissolved? That is not possible!”

233. *Tena kho pana samayena cattāro mallapāmokkhā sīsaṃnhātā ahatāni vatthāni nivatthā — “Mayaṃ Bhagavato citakaṃ ālimpessāmā”ti na sakkonti ālimpetuṃ. Atha kho kusinārakā mallā āyasmantaṃ Anuruddhaṃ etadaṅgucūṃ — “Ko nu kho, bhante Anuruddha, hetu ko paccayo, yenime cattāro mallapāmokkhā sīsaṃnhātā ahatāni vatthāni nivatthā — “Mayaṃ Bhagavato citakaṃ ālimpessāmā”ti na sakkonti ālimpetu”nti? “Aññathā kho, vāseṭṭhā, devatānaṃ adhippāyo”ti. “Kathaṃ pana, bhante, devatānaṃ adhippāyo”ti? “Devatānaṃ kho, vāseṭṭhā, adhippāyo — “Ayaṃ āyasmā Mahākassapo pāvāya kusināraṃ addhānamaggappaṭippanno mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ pañcamattehi bhikkhusatehi. Na tāva Bhagavato citako pajjalissati, yāvāyasmā Mahākassapo Bhagavato pāde sirasā na vandissati”ti. “Yathā, bhante, devatānaṃ adhippāyo, tathā hotū”ti.*

233. Just at that time four Malla chieftains had bathed their heads and clad themselves in new garments with the intention of setting fire to the funeral pyre of the Blessed One. However, they were unable to set it alight! Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said to the Venerable Anuruddha, “What, Venerable sir, is the reason, what is the cause, that four Malla chieftains who have bathed their heads, and clad themselves in new garments, with the intention of setting fire to the funeral pyre of the Blessed One, are unable to do so?”

“It is because you, Vāseṭṭhas, have one purpose, and the deities have another.”

“What, Venerable sir, is the purpose of the deities?”

“The purpose of the deities, Vāseṭṭhas, is this, “The Venerable Mahākassapa is now coming along the high road from Pāvā to Kusinārā with a great company of monks, with five hundred monks. The funeral pyre of the Blessed One will not ignite until the Venerable Mahākassapa has been able to pay homage at the feet of the Blessed One.”

“Even Venerable sir, let it be according to the purpose of the deities!”

234. *Atha kho āyasmā Mahākassapo yena kusinārā makuṭabandhanaṃ nāma mallānaṃ cetiyaṃ, yena Bhagavato citako tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā ekaṃsaṃ cīvaram katvā añjaliṃ pañāmetvā tikkhattuṃ citakaṃ padakkhiṇaṃ katvā Bhagavato pāde sirasā vandi. Tānipi kho pañcabhikkhusatāni ekaṃsaṃ cīvaram katvā añjaliṃ pañāmetvā tikkhattuṃ citakaṃ padakkhiṇaṃ katvā Bhagavato pāde sirasā vandimṃsu. Vandite ca pañāyasmatā Mahākassapena tehi ca pañcahi bhikkhusatehi sayameva Bhagavato citako pajjali.*

234. Then the Venerable Mahākassapa went on to the Malla shrine of Kusinārā named Makuṭabandhana where the funeral pyre of the Blessed One was. When he arrived, he arranged his robe on one shoulder, and paying respect with palms joined (*añjali*) he circumambulated the pyre three times, keeping it on his right, he paid homage at the feet of the Blessed One. Those five hundred monks arranged their robes on one shoulder, and paying respect with palms joined they circumambulated the pyre three times, keeping it on their right, and paid homage at the feet of the Blessed One. When the Venerable Mahākassapa and those five hundred monks had paid homage, the funeral pyre of the Blessed One ignited by itself.

This ancient tradition is maintained by Buddhists to this day when visiting a pagoda it is customary to remove one's shoes, and circumambulate it, keeping it on one's right.

235. *Jhāyamānassa kho pana Bhagavato sarīrassa yaṃ ahoṣi chavīti vā cammanti vā maṃsanti vā nhārūti vā lasikāti vā, tassa neva chārikā paññāyittha, na masi; sarīrāneva avasissimsu. Seyyathāpi nāma sappissa vā telassa vā jhāyamānassa neva chārikā paññāyati, na masi; evameva Bhagavato sarīrassa jhāyamānassa yaṃ ahoṣi chavīti vā cammanti vā maṃsanti vā nhārūti vā lasikāti vā, tassa neva chārikā paññāyittha, na masi; sarīrāneva avasissimsu. Tesañca pañcannaṃ dussayugasatānaṃ dveva dussāni na dayhimsu yañca sabba-abbhantarimaṃ yañca bāhiraṃ. Daddhe ca kho pana Bhagavato sarīre antalikkhā udakadhārā pātubhavitvā Bhagavato citakaṃ nibbāpesi. Udakasālatopi abbhunnamitvā Bhagavato citakaṃ nibbāpesi. Kosinārakāpi mallā sabba-gandhodakena Bhagavato citakaṃ nibbāpesuṃ. Atha kho kosinārakā mallā Bhagavato sarīrāni sattāhaṃ sandhāgāre sattipañjaraṃ karitvā dhanupākāraṃ parikkhipāpetvā naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkariṃsu garuṃ kariṃsu mānesuṃ pūjesuṃ.*

235. As the Blessed One's body burned, from the outer skin, the inner skin, the flesh, the nerves, and the fluid of the joints, neither soot nor ash was seen: and only the bones remained. Just as one sees no soot or ash when ghee or oil is burned, when the Blessed One's body burned, the outer skin, the inner skin, the flesh, the nerves, and the fluid of the joints, neither soot nor ash was seen, and only the bones remained. Of the five hundred pieces of cloth the innermost and outermost were both consumed. When the Blessed One's body had been burnt up, streams of water fell from the sky and extinguished the Blessed One's funeral pyre; and streams of water burst forth from the earth, and extinguished the Blessed One's funeral pyre. The

Mallas of Kusinārā also brought water scented with all kinds of perfumes, and extinguished the funeral pyre of the Blessed One.

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā surrounded the bones of the Blessed One in their council hall with a lattice work of spears and a rampart of bows, and for seven days they paid respect, honour, reverence, and homage with dance, song, and music, with garlands and perfumes.

Partition of the Relics

(Sarīradhātuvibhājanam)

236. Assosi kho rājā māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho rājā māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesi — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo ahampi khattiyo, ahampi arahāmi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, ahampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmi”ti.

Assosum kho Vesālikā Licchavī — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho Vesālikā Licchavī kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesum — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo mayampi khattiyā, mayampi arahāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, mayampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmā”ti.

Assosum kho kapilavatthuvāsī sakyā — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho kapilavatthuvāsī sakyā kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesum — “Bhagavā amhākaṃ nātisettho, mayampi arahāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, mayampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmā”ti.

Assosum kho allakappakā bulayo — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho allakappakā bulayo kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesum — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo mayampi khattiyā, mayampi arahāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, mayampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmā”ti.

Assosum kho rāmagāmakā koḷiyā — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho rāmagāmakā koḷiyā kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesum — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo mayampi khattiyā, mayampi arahāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, mayampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmā”ti.

Assosi kho veṭṭhadīpako brāhmaṇo — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho veṭṭhadīpako brāhmaṇo kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesi — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo ahaṃ pismi brāhmaṇo, ahampi arahāmi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, ahampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmi”ti.

Assosum kho pāveyyakā mallā — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho pāveyyakā mallā kosināarakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesum — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo mayampi khattiyā, mayampi arahāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, mayampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmā”ti.

Evam vutte kosināarakā mallā te saṅghe gaṇe etadavocum — “Bhagavā amhākaṃ gāmakkhette parinibbuto, na mayaṃ dassāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāga”nti.

236. The king of Māgadha, Ajātasattu, the son of the queen of the Videha clan, heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” Then the king of Māgadha, Ajātasattu, the son of the queen of the Videha clan, sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, I too am of the warrior caste. I am worthy to receive a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. Over the Blessed One’s remains I will erect a pagoda, and in their honour I will celebrate a festival!”

The Licchavī of Vesāli heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” The Licchavī of Vesāli sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, and we too are of the warrior caste. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One we will put up a pagoda, and in their honour we will celebrate a festival!”

The Sakyans of Kapilavatthu heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” The Sakyans of Kapilavatthu sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One was the chief of our clan. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One we will put up a pagoda, and in their honour we will celebrate a festival!”

The Bulis of Allakappa heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” The Bulis of Allakappa sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, and we too are of the warrior caste. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One we will put up a pagoda, and in their honour we will celebrate a festival!”

The Koḷiyas of Rāmagāma heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” The Koḷiyas of Rāmagāma sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, and we too are of the warrior caste. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One we will put up a pagoda, and in their honour we will celebrate a festival!”

The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, and I am a Brahmin. I am worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One will I put up a pagoda, and in their honour will I celebrate a festival!”

The Mallas of Pāvā heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” Then the Mallas of Pāvā sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, and we too are of the warrior caste. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One we will put up a pagoda, and in their honour we will celebrate a festival!”

When they heard these things the Mallas of Kusinārā spoke to the assembled monks, saying, “The Blessed One died in our village domain. We will not give away any part of the remains of the Blessed One!”

237. *Evaṃ vutte doṇo brāhmaṇo te saṅghe gaṇe etadavoca —*

*“Suṇantu bhonto mama ekavācaṃ,
Amhāka. Buddho ahu khantivādo.*

*Na hi sādhu yaṃ uttamapuggalassa,
Sarīrabhāge siyā sampahāro.*

*Sabbeva bhonto sahitā samaggā,
Sammodamānā karomaṭṭhabhāge.*

*Vitthārikā hontu disāsu thūpā,
Bahū janā cakkhumato pasannā”ti.*

237. When they had thus spoken, Doṇa the Brahmin addressed the assembled group, saying:

“Listen, good sirs, to a speech from me.
Our Buddha was a teacher of patience.
It is unseemly that strife should arise over dividing
The remains of the best of beings!
Let us all, sirs, with one accord unite
In friendly harmony to make eight portions.
Wide spread let pagodas rise in every land
So that mankind may have faith in the Enlightened One!”

238. *“Tena hi, brāhmaṇa, toaññeva Bhagavato sarīrāni atṭhadhā samaṃ savibhattaṃ vibhajāhī”ti. “Evaṃ, bho”ti kho doṇo brāhmaṇo tesam saṅghānaṃ gaṇānaṃ paṭissutvā Bhagavato sarīrāni atṭhadhā samaṃ suvibhattaṃ vibhajitvā te saṅge gaṇe etadavoca — “Imaṃ me bhonto tumbaṃ dadantu ahampi tumbassa thūpañca mahañca karissāmī”ti. Adaṃsu kho te doṇassa brāhmaṇassa tumbaṃ.*

Assosum kho pippalivaniyā moriyā — “Bhagavā kira kusinārāyaṃ parinibbuto”ti. Atha kho pippalivaniyā moriyā kosinārakānaṃ mallānaṃ dūtaṃ pāhesum — “Bhagavāpi khattiyo mayampi khattiyā, mayampi arahāma Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgaṃ, mayampi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca karissāmā”ti. “Natthi Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ bhāgo, vibhattāni Bhagavato sarīrāni. Ito aṅgāraṃ harathā”ti. Te tato aṅgāraṃ hariṃsu.

238 “Then, Brahmin, divide the remains of the Blessed One into eight equal portions.”

“Even so good sirs,” said Doṇa in assent to the assembled group. Then having divided the remains of the Blessed One into eight equal portions, he said to them, “Give me, good sirs, this vessel, and I will erect a pagoda over it and establish a festival in its honour.” So they gave the vessel to Doṇa the Brahmin.

The Moriyas of Pippalivana heard, “The Blessed One has just attained final cessation at Kusinārā.” Then the Moriyas of Pippalivana sent a messenger to the Mallas, saying, “The Blessed One belonged to the warrior caste, and we too are of the warrior caste. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. Over the remains of the Blessed One we will put up a pagoda, and in their honour we will celebrate a festival!”

When they heard the reply, “There is no portion of the remains of the Blessed One left over. The remains of the Blessed One are all distributed,” they took away the embers.

Honouring the Relics with a Pagoda

(Dhātuthūpapūjā)

239. *Atha kho rājā māgadho Ajātasattu vedehiputto Rājagahe Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akāsi. Vesālikāpi Licchavī Vesāliyaṃ Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akaṃsu. Kapilavatthuvāsīpi sakyā kapilavatthusmiṃ Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akaṃsu. Allakappakāpi bulayo allakappe Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akaṃsu. Rāmagāmakāpi kolīyā rāmagāme Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akaṃsu. Veṭṭhadīpakopi*

brāhmaṇo veṭṭhadīpe Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akāsi. Pāveyyakāpi mallā pāvāyaṃ Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akāṃsu. Kosinārakāpi mallā kusinārāyaṃ Bhagavato sarīrānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akāṃsu. Doṇopi brāhmaṇo tumbassa thūpañca mahañca akāsi. Pippalivaniyāpi moriyā pippalivane aṅgārānaṃ thūpañca mahañca akāṃsu. Iti aṭṭha sarīrathūpā navamo tumbathūpo dasamo aṅgārathūpo. Evametaṃ bhūtapubbanti.

239. Then the king of Māgadha, Ajātasattu, the son of the queen of the Videha clan, made a pagoda¹ (*thūpa*) in Rājagaha over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. The Licchavī of Vesāli made a pagoda in Vesāli over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. The Bulis of Allakappa made a pagoda in Allakappa over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. The Koliyas of Rāmagāma made a pagoda in Rāmagāma over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa made a pagoda in Veṭṭhadīpa over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. The Mallas of Pāvā made a pagoda in Pāvā over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. The Mallas of Kusinārā made a pagoda in Kusinārā over the remains of the Blessed One, and held a festival. Doṇa the Brahmin made a pagoda over the vessel, and held a festival. The Moriyas of Pippalivana made a pagoda over the embers, and held a festival. Thus were there eight pagodas for the remains, and one for the vessel, and one for the embers. This was how it was then.

240. *Aṭṭhadōṇaṃ cakkhumato sarīraṃ, sattadōṇaṃ jambudīpe mahenti.
Ekañca dōṇaṃ purisavaruttamassa, rāmagāme nāgarājā maheti.*

Ekāhi dāthā tidivehi pūjitā, ekā pana gandhārapure mahīyati.

Kāliṅgarañño vijite punekaṃ, ekaṃ pana nāgarājā maheti.

Tāsseva tejena ayaṃ vasundharā,

Āyāgasetṭhehi mahī alaṅkatā.

Evaṃ imaṃ cakkhumato sarīraṃ,

Susakkaṃ sakkatasakkatehi.

Devindanāgindanarindapūjito,

Manussindasetṭhehi tatheva pūjito.

¹ The word “pagoda” is used for many different kinds of structures. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta uses the word “*thūpa*” (vedic: *stūpa*) for the structure built over the remains of a Buddha, a Solitary Buddha, an Arahant, or a Wheel-turning monarch (Cakkavattī). Elsewhere the sutta uses the word “*cetiya*” for a shrine built to honour the dead warriors of the Vajjī, and for several shrines at which the Buddha rested during his long journey to Kusināra.

*Taṃ vandatha pañjalikā labhitoā,
Buddho have kappasatehi dullabhoti.*

*Cattālīsa samā dantā, kesā lomā ca sabbaso.
Devā hariṃsu ekekaṃ, cakkavālaparamparāti.*

Mahāparinibbānasuttaṃ Niṭṭhitam Tatiyaṃ

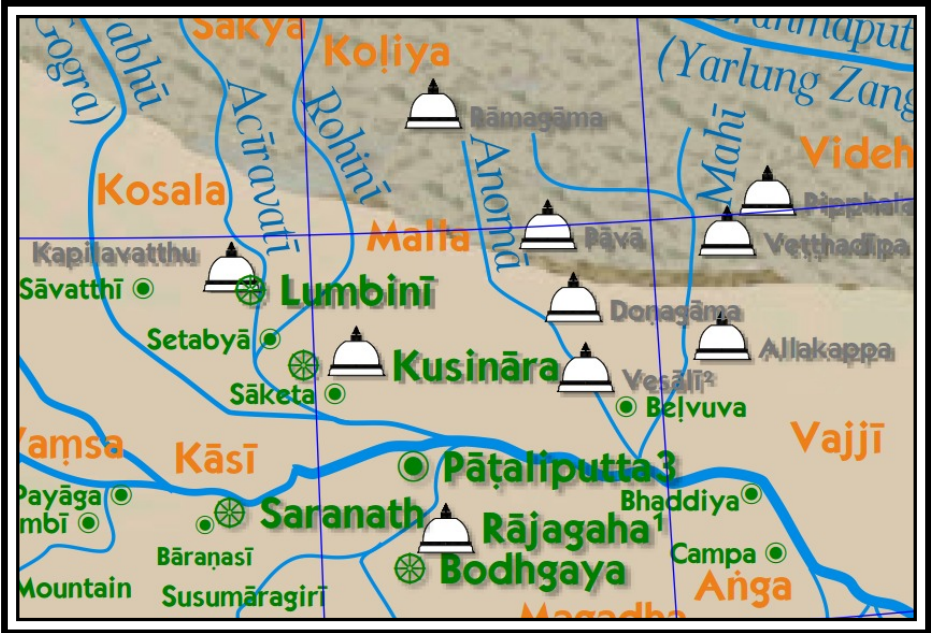
240. Eight measures of relics there were of the seer,
Of the best of the best of men. In India seven are worshipped,
One measure in Rāmagāma by the kings of the nāgas.
One tooth, too, is honoured in heaven, and one in Gandhāra's
city,
One in the Kāliṅga realm, and one more by the Nāga race.

“Through their glory the bountiful earth is made bright with
offerings painless —
For with such are the Great Teacher's relics best honoured by
those who are honoured,
By gods, nāgas, and kings, by the noblest of monarchs —
Bow down with clasped hands!
Rare is it to meet a Buddha through hundreds of ages!”

End of the Book of the Great Decease

The Ten Pagodas

The map shows the approximate locations of the ten pagodas built over the Buddha's remains after his demise. See [India in the Time of the Buddha](#) for more details and a PDF file of the full map.



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